**2017 National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky**

**State Convention**

Focusing on Our Future

Hear Yea! Hear Yea! Hear Yea! Come one and come all. The annual state convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky will be held the weekend of September 22, 23, and 24 at the Hilton Garden Inn Northeast, 9850 Park Plaza Avenue, Louisville, KY 40241.  You can make room reservations by calling the hotel directly at 502-423-0018.  Don’t forget to mention that you are with the NFB of Kentucky.  You don’t want to miss out on our reduced room rates.  Reservations must be made no later than Friday, September 8th in order to guarantee you will have a room.  The hotel room rate is $135 a night, plus tax which will total $156.60.  You can accommodate up to four persons in a room.  Because this year’s room rates are higher than usual, the affiliate will subsidize rooms up to $35 per night per room for members.  A member is someone who has paid his or her dues to a chapter or division on or before August 1st, 2017.  In addition, a member must preregister for the NFBK state convention by the deadline to qualify for the room subsidy.  Once the details are worked out with the hotel we will let you know how your room will be credited the $35 per night.

Preregistration is once again being offered.  You save money and time by completing the registration process.  It also helps Mike Freeholm, our treasurer, with convention details and meal planning.   Your convention registration fee is $15 per person.  Registration is charged to help off-set convention costs, and is not your membership dues. Members will be given a complementary luncheon ticket.  Non-members will pay $21.  Banquet tickets for members are $26, and non-members will pay $30.  The deadline for preregistration is Friday, September 15, 2017.

The Technology Assistance Division will start things off the Friday morning of the 22nd by hosting its Technology Symposium.  Todd Stephens, President of TAD, and his board members have an agenda ready to present.  Mr. Stephens will make preregistration available to those attending the TAD seminar.  So, you should be on the lookout for this additional registration information. It is my understanding that lunch will be available for those attending the symposium.

Our newly formed Sports and Recreation Division will meet later that afternoon of the 22nd from 5:00 until 6:30 PM.  Jayne Seif is president of this division and I am quite sure she has something interesting up her sleeve.  If you are a sports and leisure sort of person you should give serious consideration to joining this active division.

There will be an open meeting of the resolutions committee in the presidential suite Friday evening.  The time will be announced. This is your opportunity to hear the proposed resolutions that will be presented to, and voted on by the membership during our Saturday afternoon general session.  Katie Adkins is the chairperson of resolutions.  You can email her at kadkins816@gmail.com or phone her at, 502-533-5933 if you are interested in submitting a resolution.

I hope you will join us at our Friday evening social.  This is a great opportunity to mix and mingle with friends.  There will be a cash bar, light snacks and music to keep the place jumping.  We will begin drawing the names for our reverse raffle.  Once again this year we will have an auction, however this time we have decided to make it a live auction.  Michael Freholm will be our auctioneer.  Michael will no doubt add an element of fun and laughter to the event.  If you would like to donate a new item we would be most appreciative. The proceeds from the auction go toward defraying convention expenses.

Speaking of the Reverse Raffle, you will most certainly want to purchase your tickets.  A $10 donation puts you in the drawing for several cash prizes.  As you have probably guessed by the title, the last name drawn is the big prize winner of $500.  The second-to-last name drawn will receive $250.  There is another twist to all of this.  To add to the fun we draw every ticket.  The first lucky name drawn will be the proud winner of $25.  The excitement builds as the drawing continues because every twenty-fifth name pulled will win $25.  The more tickets sold means the possibility of more $25 prizes being given away.  Tickets are now available.  You can contact me; Cathy Jackson, your local chapter president, or any NFBK board member to make a purchase, or to help sell.  The person selling the most tickets will receive the amount equivalent to one-night’s stay at the hotel, at the convention rate.  The person, who sells the winning ticket drawn, will receive the cash equivalent of a banquet ticket.  Let’s get busy!

Child care will be available if there are at least three children who need the service.  Jayne Seif, a certified child-care provider, will be in charge of hiring licensed caregivers.  The cost per child will be $20. We will provide snacks, lunch, and dinner.  The safety and well-being of your child is the most important thing to us.  Therefore, you must register your child or children no later than Friday, September 8th, so that we know how many attendants we must hire.  There is space provided on the preregistration form to register your child (ren) for childcare.  If you have any questions, please contact Jayne Seif at 502-500-7675 or jayneseif@att.net.

We will call the convention to order at 9:00 AM sharp on Saturday morning the 23rd.  I have started working on the agenda and inviting guest speakers.  I think you will be pleasantly surprised at what’s in store.  It is customary for our national representative to share with us what’s happening on the national level.  This year we are blessed to have Dr. Fred Schroeder to serve in this capacity.  Fred has been a member of the NFB for a number of years.  He has served as the first-vice president of the national organization, and currently holds the office of president of the World Blind Union.

I must admit that I wasn’t sure if the concept of having the luncheon open board meeting would be a popular event when I first approached our board about the idea a number of years ago.  But, it continues to be well attended.  The Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky will hold a brief business meeting during the luncheon on Saturday at noon.  This gives the members an opportunity to witness those who lead the Kentucky Affiliate at work.

It’s back to business after lunch.  Most of the afternoon session is dedicated to the business of the organization.  We will discuss legislation, vote on the resolutions that are presented by the committee, hear the treasurer’s report, discuss old and new business, and elect the board of directors.  Members are expected to be in attendance.  Non-members are cordially invited to join us.

After a hard day’s work it’s time to sit back and enjoy the annual banquet.  Our banquet is a special time for our members and invited guests.  We can revel in our success knowing we share the true spirit of the NFB. This year our banquet address will be given by our national representative, Fred Schroeder.  Fred has been a friend and colleague of mine for several years.  I know we will be captivated by his address.

Our banquet is particularly enjoyable for other reasons as well.  We have many members and friends of the NFBK who work tirelessly to keep this Affiliate moving in a positive direction.  They need to be recognized for their efforts.  George Stokes is chairing the awards committee this year.  If you have someone in mind that you believe deserves special recognition you are encouraged to contact George at: george4581@gmail.com, or by phone at, 502-330-2344.

The NFB of Kentucky believes strongly in education.  That’s why we continue to support our scholarship program.  What better place to make these presentations than at the banquet where the recipients can bask in the spotlight.

The convention will wind down on Sunday morning.   Our National Association to Promote the Use of Braille in Kentucky Division, our Entrepreneurs Division, and our Technology Assistance Division will hold their annual meetings and election of officers.  If you are interested in one or all of these divisions you should check out the meeting times and place and make sure you are present.  It is safe to say that the respective presidents are looking forward to your participation.

Although this is a hectic time of year preparing for state convention, it is also rewarding.  I am proud of the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky and how the members have stepped up to make sure we meet our goals.  It is also exciting to be an Affiliate of the nation’s oldest and largest membership organization of the blind, The National Federation of the Blind.

Cathy Jackson, President

National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky