PCNFB Chapter Minutes for October 13, 2016

The Monthly meeting of the Potomac Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind was convened at 7 p.m. by President John Halverson. Twenty members were present. This month’s icebreaker was what is your favorite foreign country to visit (either you’ve already visited or you wish to visit).

The NFB pledge was recited.

The minutes of the September 8, 2016 meeting were accepted without correction.

Treasurer’s Report for the period of 9/07/2016 to 10/13/2016

Beginning Balance: $6263.37

Income: 50-50 cash $14.00

New Member Dues: $5

Total Income $514.00

Disbursements:

NFB Pac for October $75.00

NFB VPAD for October $75.00

NFB Youth Fund: $100.00

Check to Caterer: $440.00

Tip to Caterer: $100.00

Check to MWABA: $600.00

Total Disbursements: $1290.00

Ending Balance as of 10/13/2016: $5487.37

Philosophy Discussion

Tracy Soforenko led the philosophy discussion for this month about how we must step outside our comfort zone and display courage against discrimination and inequality. Tracy urged the chapter members to go out there and vote because we live in a democracy. Our voices need to be heard. The Federation wants to hear what problems we have and what resolutions can be put in place. There will be a conference call on Monday, October 24, where Federationists of the common wealth can bring forth their concerns to the Resolutions Committee. At a time long ago, blindness agencies thought that it was in the best interest of their blind consumers that they choose their leaders. That is not the case. Our movement was founded with the mission that we the blind of the United States have one collective voice. We are more powerful that way with one voice in legislative affairs and demonstrations. There are laws in place that are unjust because individuals who are blind are being discriminated against. For example, in Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals are being discriminated against because they are not given materials in an accessible format. Inaccessible websites prohibit screen reader users to fully participate alongside their non-sighted counterparts.

There’s an example in Missouri where a blind couple was taken their right to parent because a social worker deemed it appropriate to take the infant of blind parents because she thought that the blind parents would need 24-hour sighted supervision. This is the lack of awareness. .

Vanda Pharmaceuticals

A local Vanda Pharmaceuticals representative wishes to come in and speak to our chapter about the Non 24 drug. There has been a rep that has come in the past to speak to the chapter, but this would be a new rep. There are new types of drugs that will be coming out that will have different symptoms.

Chapter Picnic

The picnic was a success. There were about 28 people present at the home of Sandy and President John Halverson and there was so much food! It was a great time and the weather was wonderful.

State Convention/Bus

There will be abus departing from the St. George’s Episcopal Church on Thursday, November 10, 2016 at 1PM. The cost is $80 per person. One way is only $40. We will return to the church on Sunday, November 13, 2016. Book your rooms for the state convention because soon there will be no rooms left. Make your reservations, just in case, and you have 72 hours before the convention to cancel. Jacki Brown is collecting items for the auction and door prizes. If you have items to donate, Jacki can meet you at a Metro station. Harry Potter in Braille has been donated as well as Confederates in the Attic by Tony Horwitz and Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil. It’s going to be a big and great convention!

Metro Washington Association of Blind Athletes 1st Ever Goalball Tournament

Justin Chan shared the success of MWABA’s first goalball tournament that took place at the Atletic Center at George Mason University in Fairfax on Saturday, October 1, 2016. The New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Washington DC, and Florida teams were present and ready to play! There was a silver medal Para-Olympian, Andy was present and he played. A sorority, DBVI, NFB, and other volunteers really helped with all the other necessary activities that took place.

The girls team took home the gold medal.

Social Networking classes

Save the Date!

Danielle Trevino, who works at the National Center will be coming to northern Virginia to give classes on social media since she is a social media expert on Saturday, October 22nd. There are still some slots available if you may have an interest. The cost is $20 to cover lunch and the room availability. Please contact President John Halverson no later than Friday, October 21st if you may want to go.

Bring your smart phone/tablet or laptop.

Programming Committee

President John Halverson asked who would like to be a member of the programming committee for activities so that different guests can come to our chapter monthly to speak. He would like a conference call for members to discuss/brainstorm ideas. Evelyn Valdez, Alex Castillo, Justin Chan in addition, Arielle Silverman and Deepa Goraya all volunteered to be part of the programming committee.

Holiday Dinner

Justin will still check if Bus Boys and Poets in Sherlington is available, but the restaurant that he checked made it $40 per person and that’s too expensive.

Presidential Release

The Presidential release was played in which President Riccobono discussed an array of items such as the position he has expressed not with the foundation fighting blindness itself. Our concern is with their

As Eye See It fund raising campaign, which promotes misconceptions and fear about blindness.

We have no issue, and many of us support, the medical research that the foundation fighting blindness champions.

By promoting fears about blindness, the campaign promotes the idea that blindness is a horrible thing. In the NFB, we realize that blindness is just another characteristic, which can be addressed using the alternative techniques of capable blind people

This distinction is very important. There are many of our members who have misconceptions about the position the NFB is taking. They believe we are in opposition to the work that the foundation fighting blindness is doing. Our concern is the particular campaign.

Washington Seminar taking place on January 30, 2017 at the Holiday Inn Capitol located on 550 C Street SW. Hotel rooms are $188 a night and the Great Gathering In will be taking place that Monday at 5pm, etc

New Business

Jacki Brown is selling wine tasting tickets for the Kiwanis Club of Arlington fundraiser.

50/50 Raffle

President John Halverson won the 50/50

Have a spooky and safe Halloween!!!

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Evelyn Valdez,*

*Recording Secretary*

*2016 Virginia Fellow*