PCNFB Chapter Minutes for May 11, 2017

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.

The icebreaker was what was your favorite class in high school.

We had a moment of silence.

The NFB pledge was led and recited by Dr. Joanne Wilson

The minutes of the April 20, 2017 meeting were discussed and accepted without correction.

Treasuror’s report for the period 4/20/2017 to 5/11/2017

Beginning balance: General Fund: $5210.02

Income:

Dues 20 recurring and new members $14.50

50-50 cash April collected $5.00

Total Income: $19.50

Disbursements:

NFB Pac for May $75.00

NFB VPAD for May $75.00

White Cane Fund Donation: $350.00

Jernigan Fund Donation: $300.00

Sun Fund Donation: $300.00

tenBroek Fund Donation: $300.00

NFB Camp: $150.00

 Total Disbursements: $1550.00

Ending Balance as of 5/11/2017: $3679.02

Youth fund: unchanged total Balance: $1,000.00

Pre-Employment Transition Program for Blind Students

As seen in the past few years, the NFB of Virginia has held BELL programs for elementary age students. There isn’t a program in place for transition age students ages 14-22 years old. Blind students in northern Virginia have not had exposure to career exploration and readiness, advocacy, positive attitudes towards blindness and blind role models. They have not had work experience from blind professionals. There are 900 blind students as we know from the Department of the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) and they will not share the info with us. There are 41 blind students at George Mason University. The idea is for us to put in place a program designed for the academic school year to have sessions each month and have a liaison from the Department of the Blind along with our chapter members and affiliate leaders with themed topics such as finance, orientation and mobility, and dressing for success. .

Philosophy Discussion

Mel Demissay, an assistive technology instructor for Arlington Public Schools came to demo the Amazon Kindle app for us. Mel was extremely thorough and clear in explaining how the Kindle app works perfectly and is completely accessible with all IOS devices. He went over how one can download books in text format where Voice Over would speak the book or one can download the book with a narrator narrating the book, so you have options. The various features of Kindle include fast forwarding or rewinding and changing the seconds, the sleep timer so if you fall asleep, Kindle bookmarks your place in the book. Also, you have the ability to highlight a word and get the spelling of the word in the middle of listening to the book if you are in a sentence. You can sort books according to most recently downloaded, or according to title of the book or the author. When you have your books on your device like your phone or your iPad, you can go between devices to listen to your books without losing your place as long as it’s saved to the cloud.

Spring-Action Auction

Jacki Brown our most lively auctioneer is needing stuff for our upcoming Potomac Action Auction taking place on Saturday, June 10th at Turnberry Towers party room located at 1881 N. nash Street in Arlington from 2:30-6:30pm. Bring your friends, your own wine and beer to share, but Jacki and Charlie will be bringing something to share as well, . And the Food is back by popular demand and will be catered by Rob. Please make reservations with Sarah Blumber, our social chair no later than, Thursday, June 8th by either email: sarahblumb@gmail.com or you can call Sarah at: 202-427-4814. The cost is $25. So far we have a lotion set, an Afghan rug, a basket of some fine wines, and gift cards. Jacki is also putting together some baskets. This will be so much fun and let’s not leave it up to Bonnie and Beth to buy everything! There’s something for everyone!Come join us! If you have some things and you need Jacki to look at, just call her and email her. It’s a party so please come!

Membership

Our membership chair, Sean McMahon has called for a membership committee conference call to take place on Thursday, may 18 at 8pm. An email will be sent out to remind individuals interested with conference call instructions.

Programming Committee

Evelyn Valdez, programming committee chair announced that there will be a demo of the Venmo app which is an electronic way of doing payments and so we’ll find out how to use it!

Announcements

Sarah Blumberg, our social chair announced that she contacted Williams-Sonoma in Alexandria to do a private cooking class. We would have our own Williams-Sonoma chef, but certain chapter member(s) would have to be alongside the chef because he/she does not have the non visual alternative techniques of blindness. Members are most definitely interested in doing this with more details to come! Stay tuned!

Derek Manners gave us a legislative update. The affiliate is being called to action for Tuesday, May 16, 2017 to make calls for our two bills which is the AIM HIGH and the Accessible Technology Affordibility Act. The fact sheet will be sent to the affiliate via email and if you have any questions about the bills, please feel free to contact Derek. On Tuesday, may 16th is the first day that the House is back in session. Please make calls and do not leave voicemails. Call in and speak to a staffer and as of now, none of our congressmen in Virginia are sponsoring any of the bills.

The Arlington Kawanas is selling blueberries again. It’s one of their biggest fundraisers, you can get 10 lbs of blueberries for $32.

I hope everyone had a wonderful Memorial Day weekend!

Yours in the Federation

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Evelyn Valdez,*

*Recording Secretary*

*2016 Virginia Fellow*