PCNFB Chapter Minutes for September 14, 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. Seventeen members were present.

The icebreaker was what is your favorite breakfast item?

We had a moment of silence.

The NFB pledge was led and recited by Charlie Brown.

The minutes of the August 10, 2017 meeting were discussed and accepted without correction.

Treasurer’s report for the period from 8/10/2017 to 9/14/2017

General Fund:

Beginning Balance: $7016.47

Income:$0.00

Disbursements:

NFB PAC for September $75.00

NFB VPAD for September $75.00

Check for NFBV Board transportation $220.00

Total disbursements: $370.00

Ending Balance: $6,646.47

Youth fund: Unchanged $2,000.00

Programming Committee

Alex Castillo demoed the Seeing AI app and the AI Poly app which is artificial intelligence technology that allows you to retrieve information quickly by simply using your phone and changing the modes/channels such as document, short text, bar code reader, and person. You are now able to get information about objects and people in a room. For example, one of our members, Brandon mentioned that he is able to use the short text mode/channel in the Seeing AI app and just hover his phone over some type of text and the app would just read it. This is especially helpful if for example, you are trying to scan some mail out of your mailbox and you can just hover your phone towards the left corner of an envelope, and the app can quickly read to you the sender. You can also point the phone towards a power point screen to read you a power point presentation if you didn’t want to use your KNFB reader app. Also, you can use the bar code mode/channel to tell you what product you are seeking or looking for and it will also tell you necessary information about the product.There is a person mode/channel which will recognize people in your photos or Facebook. First, you must take a picture of an individual three times and then you save the picture with the indicated person’s name, so that way the Seeing AI app will then recognize the person who will appear most frequently in your pictures/social media. Naim also mentioned that the new iPhones have new features including Braille input and voice over activation. Brandon informed us that there’s a new free transportation ride service named Sprynt in the Arlington area and their app is user friendly. The wait time is reasonable.

Hurricane Harvey Relief

One of the benefits from the established Hurricane Harvey Relief in coordination with the NFB of Texas with Norma Crosby spearheading efforts that we as a chapter would be able to adopt a family. There’s a single mom with a medically fragile seven-year old daughter who is oxygen tank dependent, a wheelchair user, and utilizes a feeding tube. The Potomac Chapter will be donating $500 to this family.

Project RISE

Resilience, Independence, Self-Advocacy and Employment is a new pilot program for transition-age students 14-22 years old in Northern Virginia with a program coordinator role and a logistics coordinator role leading about twenty-five hours of dedicated time along with the support of core mentors in conjunction with the Department of the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI). The expectations of mentors would be to demonstrate positive skills of blindness and meet students where they are as together we learn what we know and what needs to be taught. This is an opportunity for us to take the low expectations that blind students in Northern Virginia might be facing.

State Convention

In preparation of our upcoming state convention taking place on Friday, Nov. 3-5 at The Westin Tysons Corner in Falls Church, Seaton and Patti Droppers have confirmed with the rector’s office that someone from St. Georges Episcopal Church will be present. Nancy briefly announced the members of the hospitality committee and the menus, potential theme and entertainment for the Friday night hospitality event. Sarah, social chair announced the picnic taking place on Saturday, September 16th at the home of John and Sandy Halverson. Jacki Brown, our auctioneer conveyed that she needs your best things. She is looking for nice quality things like perhaps a basket from your hairdresser, etc. Jacki has already gathered four door prizes. Please try to get some auction items and invite family and friends.

Announcements

President John Halverson announced that since both Sandy and him are retiring, they will be going on a two-week cruise. We wish John and Sandy well in their retirement and what ever their next steps may be.

Naim announced that there will be transportation provided by his dad with a cost of $60 round-trip to participate in the VABS (Virginia Association of Blind Students) “Bowling with the Blind” in Virginia Beach on Saturday, October 7th. There will be a raffle for the Amazon Tap.

I hope everyone enjoyed the picnic!

Yours in the Federation

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Evelyn Valdez,*

*Recording Secretary*

*Virginia Leadership Fellows, Classof 2016*