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FEDERATION FOCUS

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From the President

Greetings Fellow Federationists,

It's hard to believe that the 2017 National Federation of the Blind of Iowa state convention will begin in less than a month. I hope every person reading this newsletter plans to attend our convention. I'm working hard to make this year's convention a great one, full of fun and useful information. The convention agenda will be available soon; watch your email for it.

As I reflect on our journey together over the past year in preparation for the Convention, I am thinking about the many opportunities I have had as the new president of the National Federation of the blind of Iowa. In my daily life I cannot predict who I may meet and on whom I may have a positive impact.

A few weeks ago I received a Facebook message from a grandfather who wanted to sit down and talk with me about resources for his grandson who is going blind. I first met this man when I volunteered for an event unrelated to the Federation in the Cedar Rapids area. This experience pointed out to me that community involvement is important, because it provides the opportunity to tell our story and raise the public's expectations of blind people.

I arranged a meeting with the man, his wife, and his grandson just to chat. In a couple of hours of talking at a local coffee shop, I was able to answer a lot of their questions, and to build a personal relationship with them. I gave them information about the Federation, connected them with the Iowa Department for the Blind, and raised the family's expectations for this blind young man. Because I connected with my community, I was able to help and encourage this family. If I had chosen to stay home, I would have missed this opportunity. Did I bring this person into the Federation by my conversation? I don't know that yet, but I do know that I was able to answer questions and raise this family's expectations for the future.

Thomas Edison said that "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work." The work of the Federation is like that. It is definitely worth doing when we accomplish the important task. But no one person can do all the work that needs to be done in the National Federation of the Blind. I encourage each member and chapter to identify opportunities every day to step up and do the work of the Federation. October is Meet the Blind Month, a perfect time to participate in a wide range of activities to

educate and get to know our communities. Let me know about the opportunities you take to tell people about the National Federation of the Blind, and how you raise public expectations for blind people every day.

See you at our state convention.

Sincerely,

Jerad S. Nylin, President

National Federation of the Blind of Iowa

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News Right Now!

State Convention, Pre-Register NOW!

It is time for the annual National Federation of the Blind of Iowa state convention to be held September 29-October 1, 2017 at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites, Des Moines Northwest, 4800 Merle Hay Road, Des Moines, Iowa 50322. This year's convention will be packed with information and fun! Kevan Worley will join us as our national representative on behalf of President Mark Riccobono.

To save \$5 off the cost of each food event you attend and the registration fee, pre-register and pay for the convention no later than September 20, 2017. After that date, all prices are \$5.00 higher, so pre-register today!

[Register online here](#), or copy and paste the below URL in your web browser.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/national-federation-of-the-blind-of-iowa-2017-convention-tickets-36986874738>

Or mail your registration form along with your check to NFBI, P.O. Box 93071, Des Moines, IA 50393.

Hotel room rates this year are \$82.00 plus tax per night for standard and king-sized rooms. Convention rates are available from September 27-October 2, 2017.

To make hotel reservations no later than September 15, 2017, at 5:00 p.m.:

Call: 515-278-4755 or 800-HOLIDAY (800-465-4329), OR

Visit: www.holidayinn.com/desmoinesia and use the 3-letter code NFB

Provide the following information:

Group Name: NFBI–National Federation of the Blind of Iowa

Group Code: NFB

Chapters and individuals, please remember to keep the fun going by donating door prizes for our convention! Contact April Enderton (alenderton@gmail.com) with questions.

The Des Moines chapter invites members of any chapter to join us for a community service project at Meals from the Heartland from 9:00-11:00 a.m. on September 29. Contact Cindy Ray, chapter President (cindyray@gmail.com) to sign up.

Stay Connected

[Like the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa on Facebook.](#)

[Follow us on Twitter @NFB_Iowa.](#)

Sign up for [the tall corn list serve](#)

Member Spotlight

NOTE: Each issue of this newsletter will introduce one of our affiliate members. Enjoy getting to know others who share our Federation spirit and philosophy, and live the lives they want. Our featured member this issue is Kristen Steele.

**Who is Kristen Steele?
Read on to find out!
By Cindy Lou Ray, Editor**



Kristen Steele is one of the newest members of the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa. She is young, but she has already had an exciting and adventurous life, and she is anxious to be a part of the National Federation of the Blind.

Kristen has always been blind, and she is definitely an advocate for Braille. For a number of years she participated in the Braille Challenge held annually in Des Moines. She graduated from Glenwood High School in December, 2014 with a 4.0 grade average and began her college career at the University of Nebraska Omaha, planning to be an education major. "The Disabilities office was horrible," she says. "I never got the notes from the work on the board, so it was difficult for me to complete homework in a timely manner. I couldn't get my materials in braille, and I didn't want to use readers. Also, I wondered how I would work with middle-school students or convince their parents that I could teach them well since I did not know print." So Kristen decided she must change majors.

"My family members have had careers in the medical profession, with my uncle and father being pharmacists," she said, "so I thought it would be great if I could find such a niche. She had a blind friend who was a massage therapist. "I had a massage and toured my friend's office." Massage therapy seemed like a good option, so she toured the Midwest School of Massage in Omaha. Her experience at Midwest School of Massage was the opposite of her experience with University of Nebraska Omaha. "My instructor converted all of the PowerPoints to .rtf files, and he took off two days to help me learn my way around the facility," Kristen says. "To teach me the techniques, he performed the procedures on me; then I would repeat the procedures on another student. Our classes were Mondays through Thursdays, and sometimes the instructor would come in on Fridays to help me in areas where I felt I needed assistance."

The coursework, including the 200 clinical hours, took about a year, and Kristen graduated with a 4.0 grade point, just as she had from high school.

As she approached the end of her schooling to become a massage therapist, Kristen applied to take the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx.) Consistent with her reading preference, she asked to take the exam in Braille. Unfortunately, Kristen was forced to file a federal lawsuit to make this possible. The National Federation of the Blind fought hard on her behalf. "President Riccobono was compassionate and supported my desire to take the exam in Braille and for this I am truly grateful," Kristen Said. "A settlement

was reached with the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB), and the lawsuit has been dismissed. On June 3, Kristen took the MBLEx in electronic Braille and she passed! Because of the support of the NFB, she will be able to practice massage therapy as she had planned.

Kristen pursued the law suit not only because she truly feels this job is a calling for her, but she held out in the hope that her success will help other blind people achieve the lives they want in the various massage practices.

Kristen's success with the exam was well timed. "I worked for a Hospice agency, and one of the things I did there was to administer comfort touch, which is a nurturing style of acupressure designed for the elderly and ill." Because of an undesirable change of contract, she is no longer employed at this Hospice facility.

Besides the massage work she was doing, Kristen learned to do other things at the Hospice. She is willing to try things she never did before. "One day a terminal, bed-ridden patient asked me for a drink of water," she said. "I said I would try, and I spilled some down her front, but we laughed. I have learned techniques in helping patients move." She also was able to help people to the dining room with her guide dog guiding her along the hallways.

"Many people have helped me along this road," she says. "Dr. Frances Mary D'Andrea, former chair of the Braille Authority of North America, pointed me in the right direction, recommending that I contact NFB, who would be the first to write to the Board on my behalf. My instructor at the Kansas Specialty Dog School (KSDS, Inc.) faxed a letter to my employer explaining that I would need to be able to take my dog with me most of the time when I go to assist patients."

It has all been an education for Kristen and for those she works with. "I truly want to get involved in the National Federation of the Blind so that I can help others," she says. She attended her first National Federation of the Blind convention in Orlando, Florida in July 2017.

You will want to meet Kristen. She is a young and enthusiastic woman from whom I think we will hear much in the years ahead, beginning with her appearance at our state convention on Saturday, September 30.

Chapter and Division Highlights

At Large: (April Enderton, alenderton@gmail.com) Our chapter will not meet on the regular meeting date in September, since we will meet at state convention in person on September 29. Registration for the annual meeting will begin at 2:30 p.m., with collection of \$5 dues. The meeting will begin at 3:00 p.m. Bettina Dolinsek will discuss fitness with us. We will hold our regular October meeting on October 19 by phone.

Cedar Rapids: (Sam Claassen, blindsoul93@gmail.com) We have scheduled a screening of the film "Do You Dream in Color?" in Cedar Rapids at the CSPS Hall on October 14, 2017. We are working with local schools to schedule more screenings.

Des Moines: (Cindy Ray, cindyray@gmail.com) Des Moines held an indoor picnic with our August meeting. We are gearing up for fall activities, which will include screenings of "Do You Dream in Color" during October. On September 29, from 9:00-11:00 a.m., we welcome members from other chapters to participate in a community service project at Meals from the Heartland.

Old Capital (Iowa City): (Darrel Kirby, kirbydarrel@gmail.com) Our chapter participated in Hoover Days in West Branch on August 5, sharing a table with the Cedar Rapids chapter to braille names and hand out National Federation of the Blind information. Our annual chapter picnic was held August 19 at City Park in Iowa City.

Siouxland: (Karen Clayton, Karen@simpco.org) Contact Karen to find out the times and locations of this fall's meetings.

Southeast Iowa: (Christie Steele, steele.christiane@gmail.com) Our chapter is celebrating the recent success of our "Who Wants to be Smarter than Your Smart Phone?" trivia night. The event was held in June and we raised almost \$1300. We are currently planning our next fundraiser, a ham and beans good will donation dinner at our local Eagles Club on October 16th. We will also use this fundraiser as an opportunity to inform the public about the NFB and blind people by handing out literature. Finally, we will be selling hats with the NFB logo at state convention.

Iowa Diabetes Action Network: (Michael Barber, m.barber817@gmail.com) We will hold our regular September phone meeting on Saturday September 2 to finalize plans for the annual meeting and hear about

diabetes happenings at national convention. IDAN's annual in-person meeting will be held on Friday, September 29 at 1:00 p.m. Registration for the meeting begins at noon and costs \$5, which includes membership in the division for a year. Nancy Kane, a nationally respected endocrinologist who practices in Des Moines, and who spoke at our first Annual Meeting five years ago, will provide an update on diabetes and answer your diabetes questions. Everyone please join us to give Dr. Kane a good audience, and to learn about this very common chronic disease. We will not hold a meeting in October.

Student Committee: (Katy Olsen, olsenk1@central.edu) The Iowa students are excited to announce that we will work to establish our Iowa Association of Blind Students division this fall at state convention. This past year we have been reaching out to students across Iowa and planning for all of this to come together. We really appreciate the support we have received from our affiliate and the national student division. Without this support our efforts would have taken longer and been more difficult. We encourage all college students who live in Iowa or are attending college here to join us at state convention to kick off our division. We will have more frequent meetings than usual between now and state convention. We will be adding calls into the schedule as needed until convention, so contact me for details.

News Briefs

2017 State Convention Highlights

Prices for food events and registration in this section are available through September 20. After that date, each price increases \$5.

The Iowa Diabetes Action Network will hold its annual meeting on Friday, September 29, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. Registration will begin at 12:00 p.m. Cost is \$5, which includes membership in the organization for a year.

The At Large Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa will hold its annual meeting at 3:00 p.m., Friday, September 29, 2017. Annual chapter dues will be collected and they are \$5.

Attention Iowa Students!!! Please join us at 3:00 p.m., Friday, September 29, 2017 for a great opportunity to network with other blind students around the state. We will discuss our plans for the upcoming year and details about the start of our Iowa Association of Blind Students division. Dues of \$5 will be collected at registration beginning at 2:30 p.m. See you there!

Join fellow Federationists Friday, September 29, 2017 from 5:15-6:45 for this year's BBQ reception that will include Potato Salad, Vegetable Crudites with Dip, Buffalo Wings with Bleu Cheese and Celery, Barbequed Pork Slider Sandwiches, Loaded Potato Skins with cheddar, bacon, sour cream and chives. The cost for this meal is \$15.

Convention registration will be open from 3:00-7:00 p.m. on Friday, September 29, and Saturday, September 30, from 8:00-8:45 a.m. The registration fee is \$15.

The Resolutions Committee will consider resolutions at 7:00 p.m. on Friday evening. Submit resolutions electronically to Cindy Ray at cindyray@gmail.com by September 15, 2017. You may also bring resolutions in final Braille and written form to the committee meeting.

The students are very excited to be hosting the hospitality event on Friday evening at this year's convention. It will be a night of fun team-building activities for members of all ages. There will be games, music, and a cash bar. Come join the fun and mix and mingle with old and new friends!

Our annual President's breakfast buffet will begin on Saturday morning at 7:00 a.m. The cost for this event is \$15.

Saturday lunch will be an informal program, with Federationists coming together to hear about why the federation is important to each of us, and how we can get more out of our federation. The price for your plated lunch is \$15.

Saturday evening will be the annual Banquet of the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa. Kevan Worley will deliver this year's banquet address, and our very own Scott Van Gorp will be the Master of Ceremonies. Attend the banquet for \$35.00.

Sunday, October 1, 2017 morning Devotional: Start your morning off right with great people and a great message. All denominations are welcome. This will be discussion based and will be led by Katy Olsen.

Our business meeting will be held Sunday morning.

We will have a 50-50 drawing at convention this year. Tickets are \$1 each or seven for \$5.

Jim and April Enderton's daughter, Sherry Enderton-Lloyd, has donated a reborn doll to be raffled at convention. Tickets are \$5 each, or five tickets for \$20.

Watch for more convention information as it becomes available through our various communications channels.

Recipe Corner

NOTE: In each issue we will feature a couple of recipes from our members. If you have recipes to share in this section, please e-mail them to Sandi Ryan, Editor-in-Chief, at sjryan2@gmail.com. This issue's delicious fall recipes are from April Enderton, Federation Focus Editor and At-Large Chapter President.

Great Pumpkin Cookies

2 cups flour
1 cup quick oats, uncooked
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup butter, softened
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 cup sugar
1 egg, slightly beaten
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup solid-pack pumpkin

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine flour, oats, baking soda and cinnamon; set aside. In another large bowl, cream butter with sugars until light and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla; mix well. Alternately stir in flour mixture and pumpkin; mix well. Drop ¼ cup of batter at a time onto a lightly greased cookie sheet. Using a spatula, mold each portion of batter into a pumpkin shape. Add a bit more batter to each to form the stem. Bake 20 minutes. Decorate cookies with jack-o'-lantern faces, using decorating icing and assorted candies. Makes 20 cookies.

Cinnamon Rolls with Cake Mix

2-1/2 cups warm water
2 packages active dry yeast
1 regular size yellow cake mix
4-1/2 to 5 cups flour
Brown sugar
Cinnamon

Dissolve yeast in water. Add cake mix and flour. Let rise. Roll to ½-inch thick. Spread with butter, cinnamon and sugar. Roll like a jelly roll and cut in ½-inch slices. Let rise. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes. (Dough may be refrigerated up to 24 hours before baking.) Makes 2 9- by 13-inch pans.

To make caramel rolls, put extra brown sugar in bottom of buttered pans with 2 tablespoons white karo syrup.

Upcoming Events

September 2, 2017: 1:00 PM, Iowa Diabetes Action Network Meeting (712-432-8812, 87458#).

September 5, 2017: 7:00 PM, NFBI Student Committee (712-432-8812, 87458#)

September 9, 2017: 11:00 AM, Old Capital chapter meeting, (Iowa City Public Library).
September 9, 2017: 12:00 PM, Southeast Iowa Chapter meeting (St. Paul United Church of Christ, 303 W Mt. Pleasant St, West Burlington).
September 9, 2017: 2:00 PM, Des Moines Chapter meeting (Iowa Department for the Blind).
September 16, 2017: 11:00 AM, Siouxland Chapter meeting (TBD)
September 16, 2017: 11:00 AM, Cedar Rapids Chapter meeting, (Scottish Rite Temple, 616 A Ave NE)
September 29, 2017: 1:00 PM, Iowa Diabetes Action Network Annual Meeting (TBA, Reg. 12:00 PM).
September 29, 2017: 3:00 PM, At Large Chapter Annual meeting (TBA, Reg. 2:30 PM).
September 29, 2017: 3:00 PM, Students Annual Meeting (TBA, Reg. 2:30 PM).
September 29-October 1, 2017: NFBI State Convention (Holiday Inn Northwest, 4800 Merle Hay Road, Des Moines)
October 14, 2017: 11:00 AM, Old Capital chapter meeting, (Iowa City Public Library).
October 14, 2017: 12:00 PM, Southeast Iowa Chapter meeting (St. Paul United Church of Christ, 303 W Mt. Pleasant St, West Burlington).
October 14, 2017: 2:00 PM, Des Moines Chapter meeting (Iowa Department for the Blind).
October 14, 2017: 4:00 PM, "Do You Dream in Color" screening, (CSPS Hall, Cedar Rapids).
October 15: White Cane Safety Day
October 19, 2017: 7:00 PM, At Large Chapter meeting (712-432-8812, 87458#)
October 21, 2017: 11:00 AM, Siouxland Chapter meeting (TBD)
October 21, 2017: 11:00 AM, Cedar Rapids Chapter meeting, (Scottish Rite Temple, 616 A Ave NE)

The National Federation of the Blind of Iowa knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise the expectations of blind people, because low expectations create obstacles between blind people and our dreams. You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back.