Winter 2022 Buckeye Bulletin

A publication of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio

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The National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise expectations, 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.

The National Federation of the Blind of Ohio is a 501(c)3 consumer organization comprised of blind and sighted people committed to changing what it means to be blind. Though blindness is still all too often a tragedy to those who face it, we know from our personal experience that with training and opportunity it can be reduced to the level of a physical nuisance. We work to see that blind people receive the services and training to which they are entitled and that parents of blind children receive the advice and support they need to help their youngsters grow up to be happy, productive adults. We believe that first-class citizenship means that people have both rights and responsibilities, and we are determined to see that blind people become first-class citizens of these United States, enjoying their rights and fulfilling their responsibilities. The most serious problems we face have less to do with our lack of vision than with discrimination based on the public’s ignorance and misinformation about blindness. Join us in educating Ohioans about the abilities and aspirations of Ohio’s blind citizens. We are changing what it means to be blind.

The NFB of Ohio has eight local chapters, one for at-large members, and special divisions for diabetics, merchants, students, seniors, guide dog users, and members of communities of faith. This newsletter appears three times a year and is circulated by email, posted on NFB-NEWSLINE®, our digitized newspaper-reading service by phone, and can be read or downloaded from our website, www.nfbohio.org. For information about the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio or to make address changes or be added to the mailing list, call (440) 774-8077 or email barbara.pierce9366@gmail.com. For information about NFB-NEWSLINE, our free digitized newspaper-reading service, call (866) 504-7300. Local NEWSLINE numbers are: 330-247-1241 (Akron), 330-409-1900 (Canton), 513-297-1521 (Cincinnati), 216-453-2090 (Cleveland), 614-448-1673 (Columbus), 937-963-1000 (Dayton), 567-242-5112 (Lima), 567-333-9990 (Mansfield), 740-370-6828 (Portsmouth), 937-717-3900 (Springfield), 419-806-1100 (Toledo), and 330-259-9570 (Youngstown).

Dream Makers Circle

You can help build a future of opportunity for the blind by becoming a member of our Dream Makers Circle. Your legacy gift to the National Federation of the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio can be made in the form of a will or living trust or an income-generating gift or by naming us as the beneficiary of a retirement plan, IRA, pension, or a life insurance policy. You can designate a specific amount, a percentage, or list NFB as one of several beneficiaries. For additional information contact Patti Chang at (410) 659-9314, extension 2422 or at pchang@nfb.org.

The National Federation of the Blind uses car donations to improve the education of blind children, distribute free white canes, help veterans, and much more. We have partnered with Vehicles for Charity to process donated vehicles. Please call toll-free (855) 659-9314, and a representative can make arrangements, or you can donate online by visiting [www.nfb.org/vehicledonations](http://www.nfb.org/vehicledonations).

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# **Introductory Noteby the Editor**

The year is sputtering down to its end, and we are about to welcome 2022. This newsletter brings you an in-depth report of our 2021 state convention. You will find the texts of the resolutions we passed as well as a summary of all that happened November 5 and 6. Looking ahead, you will find a report on legislative plans for the coming year as well as plans for the Washington Seminar. You will also find the list of committee appointments for the coming year. All these things are important information that you will want to keep for future reference.

It has been a difficult year, and there is no indication that the coming months will be easier. But I urge you to keep the faith. People are still losing vision and losing hope about their future. Keep attending chapter and division meetings. Prepare to do your part to support our legislative efforts, and stay engaged with NFB of Ohio efforts to keep us together and active. I wish you a happy and above all healthy 2022.

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# **From the President’s Deskby Richard Payne**

2021 certainly has been another one for the record books. However, there are still several pressing matters that will challenge us in a way that we will have to prove all the things that being in a Zoom world has taught us. Many of you have already gotten used to using platforms like Zoom and Teams to be productive, advanced, and future-focused. So I am sure that, as we begin the new year, it will be necessary to brainstorm and figure out new priorities using technology and strong relationships to build and to conduct ourselves as Federation members, which makes it possible for blind Ohioans’ lives and dreams to be transformed.

I never understood when I was a kid that my parents were trying to instill in us the disciplines that would make us responsible citizens. It was that hard work of gardening, mowing the lawn, taking out the trash, and chopping wood for fire that helped me to run the race over time. This must be one of the reasons that I have tried to be as active in the Federation as possible. I will continue to fight and work for equality and justice for the blind as long as I have breath in my body. My background as a blind person was around a lot of blind people that wanted the chance to be productive citizens and live in the world just like others, normal people. On several occasions I have witnessed blind persons who were told that awful word “no” or their life dreams were smashed by a person telling them that, because they were blind, they could not do something. In fact the people discouraging them were not always sighted; most of the time they were blind.

I too have been doused with doubt, unfairness, and the critical power of speech. However, I kept on fighting for fairness, for an opportunity, and to be a leader in this organization. It has not been easy for me inside or outside of the Federation to belong. But I paid yearly dues, marched on picket lines, and fundraised like others who saw me outside of an acceptance window. It is my spirit and desire to improve others and meet them where they are in life. We all belong and can contribute to this powerful and influential organization. It doesn’t matter if you have a PhD or a high school education. What do matter are commitment, dedication, and upholding the philosophy and mission of the largest organization of blind people in the world.

Consequently, we know that most of society have good intentions when they do the things that they think will help us, but often they create more of a stumbling block and other obstacles. Consider the websites that are not accessible, the tools for our jobs that could be easily adapted to allow us to use them, or the ongoing problems with city transit systems. But we find ourselves having to fight for laws to protect services that should be ours by right.

I am urging all chapters to reach out to their local governments and regional transit systems to continue to advocate for inclusion and accessibility. As a group we complain, but how many of us currently attend the meetings where the planning and decision-making are done? The NFB of Ohio membership is a large group that must dedicate time to attending the meetings and call to the administrators the significant and obvious inequalities so we can work together for change.

I take my stand on the NFB pledge which begins, “I pledge to participate actively in the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind.” It seems to me that one of the best tools that we have to change the world is the Federation and its membership. You and I have received help from each other’s ability to find ways to live our lives with a lending hand. Many writers have written about the benefit of helping others. Just the other day I was reminded of the admonition to teach a man to fish. This is the truth of the Federation. We must always raise the expectations of blind people and insist that we do our best to improve this world by making it more inclusive. One way doesn’t fit everyone. Our philosophy maintains that blind people are just people who cannot see—we are not broken sighted people. We are a cross-section of the broader society. Blindness is a physical characteristic, but it is not the characteristic that defines us or our future. It is low expectations and misconceptions, not blindness itself, that stand between blind people and our dreams.

Given proper training and opportunity, blind people can and do live the lives we want. It is respectable to be blind, and, with the right tools and techniques, blindness may be reduced to the level of a nuisance or inconvenience. To combat the low expectations, misconceptions, and stereotypes that are the true barriers to achieving our dreams, the blind have organized for the same reasons other minorities have—to make positive social change through collective action.

The Federation philosophy provides an overall framework for thinking about blindness: what it means and what it doesn't mean. However, it is not intended to be rigid or dogmatic. Blind people are individuals, and we may disagree on any number of things, including how to handle a given situation as blind people. What our philosophy does do is give us a positive way of thinking about our blindness, rather than the negative ways in which we have often been conditioned to think about it by society. Rather than saying that we as blind people can't do something, we try to find ways that we can and to challenge each other in a loving way, always to push the envelope and expand the limits of our independence.

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# **2021 Convention Wrap-upby Eric Duffy**

Editor’s note: Eric Duffy is the secretary of the NFB of Ohio. Here is his report of the 2021 anywhere and everywhere convention:

Shortly after the 2021 convention of the National Federation of the Blind, many of us were focused on Ohio. We were pumped! We were psyched up! However you want to phrase it, we were sure that for the most part virtual meetings were coming to an end. We started preparing for Fall activities, including the seventy-fifth convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio. We began having convention planning meetings. This was going to be a big one. Not only was it our seventy-fifth, but we were all going to be in the same hotel again. We were going to be in the same meeting room again. But no. Once again it was not to be. In mid September the Covid delta variant began surging, and the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio decided that it would be in the best interests of our members, friends, and guests to meet virtually once again. The decision was made because of the rising number of Covid-19 cases throughout the country and around Ohio at the time. But as is always the case, with the Federation we licked our wounds and went on. The committee immediately switched gears and began planning for a virtual convention.

We began our convention activities on Wednesday evening, November 3, with the Rookie Roundup. Although this event is actually intended for first-timers, many of us see it as the first meeting of our family reunion. This year in fact the Rookie Roundup was the beginning of the affiliate’s 75th birthday party. We had a little music and a few commercials from the 1940's. The voices of our four significant national leaders moved us through the decades from the beginning of our movement to the present. Of course it was wonderful having President Riccobono with us. He talked about the importance of our grassroots work and the value of membership. He said, as one of the seven founding states, Ohio was important in the beginning of our movement and remains so today.

On Thursday afternoon we had the opportunity to visit the virtual exhibit hall, and in the evening we took a virtual tour of the National Football League Hall of Fame.

On Friday morning we took a virtual tour of the State House, arranged by Jordy Stringer and the Capital Chapter. I have been on several tours of the State House and know the building pretty well, but I still enjoyed the tour. The Capital Chapter arranged both tours, and I believe the chapter was an excellent host chapter, especially in the virtual environment.

The Board of Directors met later that morning. This is always the first official meeting of the convention, and it was action packed. The convention had a chance to meet our National Representative, Everette Bacon of Utah. We discussed two ad hoc committee reports, one which contained a motion to amend the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio's constitution if passed. The motion failed, but this just goes to show that these meetings are never dull and routine. We had a lively discussion of the ad hoc committee report regarding the school for the blind’s models restoration project, for which we have raised money. The Board expressed its appreciation to everyone who contributed to the project. The afternoon convention session was jam packed. We heard from State Senator Bob Hackett, one of the sponsors of S.B. 202, our parental rights legislation. Senator Hackett shares our belief that this legislation will be signed into law in 2022.

Everette Bacon brought us greetings from President Riccobono and the Jernigan Institute. The Federation has remained active, and it seems as if the pace is only picking up. The Board of Directors has once again revised the Code of Conduct. Mr. Bacon encouraged us to read the revision and to submit our comments by noon on December 2. We feel confident that we will have an in-person convention from July 5 to 10 in New Orleans.

At the opening convention session, Kinshuk Tella and Emily Keihl talked about ending stereotypes through active advocacy. Both of these students are actively involved in their university communities, and their life experiences enabled them to proffer sound advice to blind people of all ages who are working to change attitudes about blindness.

James Clinkscale, ADA Coordinator, Manager of Disability Inclusion Enterprise Initiatives & Programs Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Professional, Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, State Human Resources Division, talked about his work to increase the recruitment, hiring, and retention of the disabled in state government. Through executive order Governor Mike DeWine has made Ohio a disability employment inclusion state. Mr. Clinkscale has the responsibility of creating training programs and developing policies to put actions to the Governor’s words. His presentation made it clear that he is committed to ensuring that blind and disabled job applicants have a fair and equal opportunity to work for the State of Ohio. I look forward to seeing more blind people employed at all levels of state government in the years to come.

Friday evening brought our usual flurry of committee and division meetings. There were meetings for blind students, merchants, and our At-Large Chapter. The Resolutions Committee considered seven resolutions. When adopted, resolutions become the policy of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio. See the article elsewhere in this newsletter for the texts of these resolutions.

Saturday morning began with a 7:30 AM meeting of the Diabetes Action Network. This division provides information and support to blind diabetics and their families from around the state.

When the convention session started, Sharla Glass from En-Vision America talked to us about our rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Affordable Health Care Act. We have the right to accessible prescription labels. But state legislation is also important. She urged us to work hard to see that H.B. 448 passes as quickly as possible.

Andra Stover talked about her experience attending the Louisiana Center for the Blind training center. She said this was both a skill-building and confidence-building experience. She was challenged to do things that she never thought she could do. She now believes she is prepared to work in competitive employment and be an active and productive part of her community. She is grateful that her counselor from the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) supported her participation in the training program.

Caroline Karbowski presented on the evolution of science accessibility. Changing technology is making things more accessible for the blind in the sciences, but teachers and professors must still open their minds and welcome the blind into the field. Caroline plans to be a teacher, and she will help provide the leadership to open a lot of doors for the blind.

We then heard from Teri Shirk, President and CEO of the Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The agency is continuously trying to create more real and meaningful opportunities for those who are blind or have low vision. This includes making internal processes and systems more accessible.

The morning concluded with a report by President Payne. He talked about how the affiliate has continued to grow and build during the pandemic and how we assisted Alex French to attend the Louisiana Center for the Blind in 2019.

There were division meetings and workshops early in the afternoon. The final general session was devoted to elections and resolutions. The Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio remains the same except that Cheryl Fields made the decision not to serve another term. We want to thank Cheryl for her service. Jordy Stringer was elected to fill the vacancy left by Cheryl. Congratulations to Jordy.

Eric Duffy was Master of Ceremonies for the annual banquet. The Convention Planning Committee decided to do something a little different this year since we were virtual and people were having different banquet meals. Those attending the banquet had the opportunity to let a small group of judges know what their banquet meal was and who would be at their table. The person selected for the best banquet meal won $75. The winner was Sheila Wilson. Sheila served butterfly wild shrimp, herring, home-made seasoned potato wedges, and salad. Eric dropped in on a couple of banquets so that Federationists could hear from others during the banquet. This was a lot of fun, but we certainly believe that we'll be in person next year, so this was our only opportunity to have this contest. Our National Representative, Everette Bacon, told us his story as he has dealt with blindness. He did it in a way to inspire those of us attending the banquet. Gavel Awards were presented to the Capital Chapter and to the Communities of Faith Division. See the article elsewhere in this newsletter. Scholarship winners also received their awards.

The convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio is always exciting, whether virtual or in person. We make decisions and take actions that make a difference in the lives of the blind of the state, whether or not they are members of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio. Join us in 2022, and be a part of the change and excitement.

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# **The 2021 NFB of Ohio Resolutions**

Editor’s Note: This year we passed seven resolutions. These now become the policy of the NFB of Ohio. Here are the texts:

**Resolution 2021-01
Regarding the Need for Ophthalmologists and Other Medical Professionals to Inform Newly Blind People of the Benefits of Rehabilitation Services**

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines us or our future, but many members of the general public do not believe or understand this principle; and

WHEREAS, too many medical professionals, such as ophthalmologists and optometrists, hold the same misconceptions about the capabilities of blind people as does the rest of society; and

WHEREAS, newly blind people frequently become frustrated because they cannot find information about how to adjust to blindness and have not been exposed to the positive philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind; and

WHEREAS, since ophthalmologists and optometrists are already treating newly blind people, they could provide such information but rarely do because they view blindness as a failure of their practice; and

WHEREAS, diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in adults, and diabetes requires medical care from endocrinologists and other medical professionals who could also improve the quality of life and independence of their patients by giving them information about rehabilitation services but frequently fail to do so; and

WHEREAS occupational therapists also have direct contact with people losing vision; and

WHEREAS, the best way to change the attitudes of medical professionals towards blindness is to influence their specialized training programs, such as reaching out to the directors of all medical schools in the State of Ohio: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio in Convention assembled this sixth day of November, 2021, that this organization strongly urge the directors or governing bodies of medical schools and graduate programs of occupational therapy in the State of Ohio to work with the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities to develop a resource list of rehabilitation services for blind patients and to encourage their students and graduates to distribute this information so that newly blind people learn to live the lives they want; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization urge Ohio medical schools, the Ohio Ophthalmological Society, the Ohio Optometric Association, the Ohio Occupational Therapy Association, and the Ohio River Region Society of Endocrinology to work with the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio to ensure that medical professionals are taught that they have an obligation to inform their patients about adjustment to blindness resources and the benefits of the positive philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind.

**Resolution 2021-02
Regarding the Need for the Ohio General Assembly to Pass Legislation Protecting the Fundamental Rights of Blind Ohioans Quickly**

WHEREAS, the blind and other disabled citizens must often work hard to pass laws protecting basic rights that the sighted and nondisabled public take for granted; and

WHEREAS, H.B. 352 and S.B.202, legislation protecting the rights of the blind and disabled to have custody of minor children, is now before the Ohio General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, HB 448 has recently been introduced in the Ohio House of Representatives to ensure that the blind have equal access to information on medication bottles, information that members of the sighted public have access to each time they fill a prescription: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio in Convention assembled this sixth day of November, 2021, that this organization call upon the Ohio General Assembly to pass both of these bills as expeditiously as possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge Governor Mike DeWine to sign both bills into law without delay.

**Resolution 2021-03
Regarding Discriminatory Language Prohibiting the Blind From Obtaining Employment in Child Care Centers**

WHEREAS, Chapter 5101:2-12 of the Ohio Administrative Code requires that “child care center staff must be able to see and hear children without the use of mechanical devices such as baby monitors, video cameras, or walkie talkies”; and

WHEREAS, 5101:2-12-20 Supervision, Staff/child Ratios and Grouping for Licensed Child Care Centers (A), specifically says: “Supervision of children is the function of actively observing and guiding a child or group of children. This includes awareness of and responsibility for the activity of each child and being physically present and near enough to intervene if needed. Supervision means child care staff members have knowledge of children's needs, accountability for their care, and knowledge of which children they are responsible for at all times. With the exception of school age children in programs that have a written supervision policy permitting school age children to be supervised as specified in paragraph (E) of this rule, no child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised. Supervised means that children shall be within sight and hearing of child care staff members at all times. Staff must be able to see and hear children without the use of mechanical devices such as baby monitors, video cameras, or walkie talkies. The use of mirrors to view children in another room does not meet the supervision requirements of this rule”; and

WHEREAS, blind child care workers and teachers have successfully supervised children of all ages and abilities without sight; and

WHEREAS, the blind have developed and rely on alternative techniques for supervising children without sight; and

WHEREAS, time after time the blind have demonstrated that sight is not required to observe actively and guide a child or group of children, including having awareness of and taking responsibility for the activity of each child and being physically present and near enough to intervene if needed; blind child care staff members, teachers, and parents have knowledge of children's needs, accountability for their care, and knowledge of which children they are responsible for; and

WHEREAS, this discriminatory rule has undoubtedly led to the denial of employment for numerous blind child care applicants and clearly resulted in the denial of one such applicant in the Columbus area; and

WHEREAS, HB352 and SB 202, which seek to prohibit discrimination against the blind and otherwise disabled in parenting and caring for minor children, are now before their respective committees in the Ohio House and Senate; and

WHEREAS, it is quite possible that discrimination against blind people applying for employment as child care workers is an unintended consequence of an Ohio administrative rule that might be easily misinterpreted by employers: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio in Convention assembled this sixth day of November, 2021, that this organization call upon the director of the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services to take any and all steps necessary to make it clear that the aforementioned rule shall in no way be interpreted to deny an otherwise qualified blind applicant employment at any child care center located in the state of Ohio; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, the state agency that has an understanding of the capacities of the blind to care for children and to perform a myriad of jobs without sight and that has the responsibility to take action to help end discrimination in the employment of the blind in Ohio, to join our active efforts to get government officials to take action immediately to clarify that this rule in no way prevents a child care center from hiring an otherwise qualified blind job applicant.

**Resolution 2021-04
Regarding Promoting Employment in Journalism for the blind and Visually Impaired in Ohio**

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind cites the unemployment rate of blind and low vision individuals as 70%; and

WHEREAS, Blind and low vision people are underrepresented in the media industry; and

WHEREAS, they are routinely discouraged from entering journalism training programs and the media industry because of its barriers to employment; and

WHEREAS, blind and low vision journalists in Ohio and around the country have consistently demonstrated that they are fully capable of working as professional journalists; and

WHEREAS, Ohio has 360 newspapers, at least fifty-two full-power television stations, over 1,000 radio stations, and countless independent news websites and other news outlets and publications; and

WHEREAS, Ohio’s media outlets provide thousands of full-time journalism jobs and countless freelance journalism opportunities: now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio in Convention assembled this 6th day of November, 2021, that this organization call upon the Ohio News Media Association, Ohio Association of Newspapers, local chapters of the Society of Professional Journalists, Ohio Association of Broadcasters, the Ohio Broadcast Educational Media Commission, the Ohio Scholastic Media Association, all Ohio colleges and universities with journalism education programs, and all Ohio news media outlets to work with the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio to ensure that blind and low vision journalists and journalism students have equal access to journalism jobs and journalism education programs.

**Resolution 2021-05
Regarding Promoting Opportunities in Ohio’s Entertainment Industry for Blind and Low-Vision Performers**

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind estimates that the current unemployment rate among the blind is 70%; and

WHEREAS, the NFB’s Performing Arts Division estimates that only 2% of all performers in the entertainment industry have any type of disability; and

WHEREAS, both the National Federation of the Blind Performing Arts Division and the Access Acting Academy, which trains blind and low-vision performers, believe blind and low-vision performers are severely underrepresented in the entertainment industry; and

WHEREAS, the Access Acting Academy reports that significant barriers remain preventing blind and low-vision actors from getting auditions and parts; and

WHEREAS, the Access Acting Academy reports that historically individuals who are blind or have low vision have been discouraged from entering performance training programs because of the barriers to finding work in the entertainment industry; and

WHEREAS, Ohio has a robust entertainment industry that includes 2,080 motion picture and television industry businesses that employ 11,700 and generate an estimated 35,500 jobs in Ohio and $1.2 billion in annual wages; The industry also includes various performing arts organizations, including theaters, music festivals, dance groups, symphonies, performing arts centers, ballets, operas, and performing arts schools that employ nearly 20,000 people and generate more than $1 billion in annual revenue: now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio in convention assembled this 6th day of November, 2021, that this organization call upon the Ohio Arts Council, the Ohio Community Theatre Association, the Ohio Educational Theatre Association, the Ohio Film Office, the Ohio Motion Picture Association, all local and county arts organizations, all Ohio Colleges and Universities with performing arts training programs, and all Ohio performing arts venues to work with the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio to ensure that blind and low vision performers have equal access to performing arts educational programs and have equal access to motion picture and television, theatre, and other performing arts jobs in Ohio.

**Resolution 2021-06
Regarding the Availability of Municipal Government Documents and Other Written Material in Alternative Formats**

WHEREAS, Ohio has 88 county governments; and

WHEREAS, Ohio has 2,246 municipal governments that include 938 city and village governments, and 1,308 township governments; and

WHEREAS, county and municipal governments regularly produce numerous documents that contain information important for residents to have access to; and

WHEREAS, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) says that public entities must ensure that their communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Justice’s Title II Technical Assistance Manual says that the ADA’s effective communications requirement means that, when a public entity provides information in written form, it must, when requested, make that information available to individuals with vision impairments in a form that is usable by them; and

WHEREAS, of the 10 largest cities in Ohio, only 20% (i.e. 2) websites provided any reasonable accommodation information on their home pages or within their first level of website menus, and only one, the City of Toledo, specifically referred to the availability of documents in alternative formats: now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio in Convention assembled this sixth day of November, 2021, that the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio call upon the Ohio Municipal League, the Mayors Association of Ohio, the Ohio City & County Management Association, and the County Commissioners Association of Ohio to work with the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio to educate county and municipal governments regarding the ADA’s requirements for providing written documents in alternative formats and regarding the importance of ensuring that instructions on how to request documents in alternative formats be easily located on the entities’ websites; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio call upon all counties and municipalities in Ohio to provide written documents in alternative formats as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio call upon all counties and municipalities in Ohio to provide clearly identified instructions regarding how blind and low vision individuals can request documents in alternative formats on their website homepage.

**Resolution 2021-07
Regarding Performing Arts Venues Providing Written Material in Alternative Formats**

WHEREAS, Title III of The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) says that, in order to provide equal access, a public accommodation is required to make available appropriate auxiliary aids and services when necessary to ensure effective communications with a person with a disability; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Justice’s Title III ADA Technical Assistance Manual states that Title III’s effective communications requirement includes providing written material in alternative formats when appropriate; and

WHEREAS, one of the examples used in the Title III Technical Assistance Manual showing when providing written material in alternative formats is appropriate is performing arts venues supplying programs for performances in alternative formats; and

WHEREAS, Ohio has a robust entertainment industry of various performing arts venues, including theaters, music festivals, dance groups, symphonies, performing arts centers, ballets, and operas; and

WHEREAS, performing arts venues have traditionally failed to provide written material in alternative formats, and, even when material in alternative formats is available, performing arts venues often fail to advertise the availability of this accommodation: now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio in Convention assembled this sixth day of November, 2021, that the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio call upon the Ohio Arts Council, the Ohio Community Theatre Association, the Ohio Educational Theatre Association, and all local and county arts organizations to work with the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio to educate all Ohio performing arts venues on the ADA’s requirement to provide written material in alternative formats and to educate Ohio’s performing arts venues regarding the importance of providing easy-to-locate instructions on how to request material in alternative formats; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio call upon all Ohio performing arts venues to provide written material in alternative formats and to provide instructions on their website home page regarding how blind and visually impaired patrons can request material in alternative formats.

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# **The NFB of Ohio Honors Hard Work and Dedication at the 2021 Conventionby Annette Lutz**

Editor’s note: Annette Lutz chairs the NFB of Ohio’s Awards Committee. Here is her report of the awards process and this year’s winners:

 One of the unique and interesting traditions that we follow here in Ohio is the presentation of the annual Gavel Awards to recognize the efforts of the best of our chapters and divisions at the banquet at our state convention. This award has been around for decades and is truly an outstanding method of honoring the chapters and divisions that step up to contribute the most to our organization in both their time and treasure, both as a group and as individuals. The competition is usually fierce, and this year was no exception.

I have had the honor to serve as chairperson of the Awards Committee for two years now and served as a member for several years before that. After doing so, I have learned to appreciate what this Gavel Award really means and the importance of what it accomplishes. Every year each chapter and division are asked to complete a report highlighting what that group and its individual members have done to promote the philosophy of the NFB, its financial contributions to the organization, and its efforts to support the work of the blind movement. These reports are not easy to compile. In fact, they can be a real challenge, but they do effectively provide a snapshot of what the group has achieved over the past year and demonstrate areas where they can improve. Over my tenure as a leader in the NFB of Ohio, I have found myself being required to complete one of these reports, first as president of the Merchants Division, and then as a chapter president, and I can say that I was not happy. The first time I completed one of these reports, I remember complaining to then affiliate President Eric Duffy about how much I hated this exercise, and I asked him what the point was anyway. He explained to me the importance of the award and the history behind it. Well, I can’t claim that I came on board with it right away, but, after several years now in leadership positions and as a member of this committee, I have definitely come to understand what this award means and the significance of what it demonstrates.

Earlier this year our affiliate leadership conducted two training sessions on the importance of the awards process, and on how to assemble the report most effectively. From what the Awards Committee received, it appears to have paid off. Just by comparing the submitted reports from last year to now, I believe that the chapter and division presidents and their members appointed to assist had a better understanding of what was being asked for and why the affiliate wanted these to be done in the first place. This was especially apparent in the case of our divisions. Last year only two divisions submitted reports, but this year all but one competed. We also had a pretty good turn-out from our chapters, with all but three competing. But it was not only the number of reports submitted, but the quality of what we received that took a step forward as well. We were very impressed with what our membership had accomplished over the last year and their ability to document their achievements in their submitted reports.

The process is not only a challenge for those who submit the reports, but I have to admit it is not a very easy task for those of us charged with scoring them. Ali Benmerzouga, Jerry Purcell, and I spent several hours going through each question of each submittal to determine the right score for each and how much weight each task should receive. We then got together on a conference call and discussed our scoring, compared notes, and tallied up our scores to determine which of so many wonderful submissions would come out as the top scorers in the affiliate. I believe that I can speak for the whole committee when I say that, even though this is a challenge, it is also very rewarding. When we read through the accomplishments of our members, we are filled with such pride to see what all of us are doing for the blind of our communities.

So, with all of this said, it is time to acknowledge the winners of this year’s Gavel Awards.

The 2021 Division Gavel Award was presented to our newest division, the Communities of Faith Division. This division was just established in January, but its president, Dr. Carolyn Peters, and its members hit the ground running. In a very short time they became one of our largest divisions in number of members. They have held monthly calls discussing various aspects of different religions and denominations and various blindness issues in each. They have established a very active email list full of encouraging words and request, and they have contributed financially to the movement. What this division has achieved in such a short time is an example to all of us of what can be done when the drive and determination are present to accomplish great things.

The 2021 Chapter Gavel Award was presented to the Capital Chapter. As president of this chapter, I could not be prouder of the accomplishments of this small group. Affiliate Vice President Suzanne Turner once stated in a chapter meeting that she attended that though we were small we were mighty, and that has been our philosophy ever since. The members of this chapter have been very active at all levels of the Federation and have always stepped up when a need was presented. In pretty much everything the Federation has done here in Ohio over the past year, at least one member of this chapter was involved and continues to be a vital part of what this affiliate achieves.

As a side note, I want to say that I felt a little uneasy about presenting the Chapter Gavel Award to the Capital Chapter when I serve both as that chapter’s president and the chairperson of the Awards Committee, but the other members of the committee assured me that they both felt strongly that this chapter was the winner. Other than the accomplishments that were outlined in our report, I believe that what helped us was the effort that our chapter made in writing the report itself. We sat down as a chapter together and went over the questions as a group. Our secretary, Maggie Stringer, took copious notes of each member’s accomplishments and recorded them in our submittal. This lead to a lively discussion of various aspects of NFB philosophy, what activities deserved to be included in the report, and what else we might be able to do in the future. I am just telling all of you this to use as a helpful tool for your chapter or division in the future. I truly believe that our group effort of writing the report is what allowed this chapter to be able to submit a more well-rounded and complete form and helped put this chapter over the top.

Congratulations to the members of both the Communities of Faith Division and the Capital Chapter! The members of the affiliate should be inspired by your achievement and be ready for their chapter or division to take the prize next year.

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# **2022 NFB-O Committee Appointmentsby Richard Payne**

Editor’s note: Here are the NFB-O president’s committees for 2022 together with the committee charges:

**1. Awards Committee**

Charge: To oversee the awards process, to provide information and feedback when necessary, and to make reasonable judgments about NFBO awards.

Annette Lutz, Chair; Jerry Purcell, Macy McClain

**2. BELL Coordinator**

Charge: To communicate and help with planning the in-person BELL Program and to organize the BELL Academy and plan efficient ways to promote and execute these important programs.

Eric Duffy, Coordinator

**3. Community Service Committee**

Charge: To educate the Ohio Affiliate about the professional and personal benefits of community service, to encourage chapters, divisions, and individuals to participate in projects in their communities, to encourage members to identify or develop and implement their own service projects, and to educate the public about NFB philosophy and the skills and abilities blind people bring to community service

Cheryl E. Fields and Pat McPherson co-chairs; Colleen Roth; Candice Armstrong; Barbara Mabry; Susan Day; Delcenia Brown; Michael Moore; Wanda Sloan; Maggie Stringer; and Joann Williams

**4. Constitution Committee**

Charge: To make sure that all NFB-O constitutions comply with the state and national constitutions, both philosophically and rhetorically.

Barbara Pierce, Chair

**5. Deaf-Blind Committee**

Charge: To aid and provide information to those who are in this unique community and to serve as a vehicle to foster a positive relationship with the rest of the NFB for the deaf-blind community.

Sharon Dodds, chair; Todd Elzey; Suzanne Turner; and William Turner

**6. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**

Charge: to provide education, training, guidance, and advocacy where needed in deepening the diversity, equity, and inclusion in this affiliate, bearing in mind that our community includes diversity of age, religion, race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, and the intersectionality of ability.

Christopher Sabine, chair; Emily Kiehl; Carolyn Peters; William Turner; Annette Anderson; Laurita Jones; Sheila Wilson; Masquenada Douglas

**7. Education Committee**

Charge: To inform the president about policies, legislation, strategies, and initiatives in which` the NFB-O should be engaged to improve educational opportunities for blind youth throughout the state.

Jordy Stringer, chair; Suzanne Turner; Debbie Baker; Annette Lutz; Marianne Denning; Caroline Karbowski

**8. Employment Committee**

Charge: To work with the president to develop policies, strategies, and initiatives to improve employment opportunities for the blind throughout the state; to give the Federation greater influence in the employment arena with the blind, employers, and state government; to develop training opportunities around accessible technology, socialization skills, resume writing, career exploration, advocacy skills, interviewing, and networking; to promote the career fair at the national convention and encourage blind Ohioans to participate in community job fairs; and to educate employers about the capacity of the blind to work.

Suzanne Turner, Chair; Christopher Sabine; Andra Stover; and Olivia Bump

**9. Financing the Movement Committee (**including SUN coordinator, Jernigan Fund coordinator, and PAC coordinator)

Charge: To make members aware of these specific organizational fundraising opportunities and to implement strategies to increase Ohio participation.

Colleen Roth, chair; Annette Lutz

**11: Fundraising Committee**

Charge: To investigate additional opportunities to increase NFB-O resources and to implement effective fundraising strategies and programming.

Todd Elzey, chair; Delcenia Brown; and Marianne Denning

**12. Legislative Committee**

Charge: To increase the organization’s visibility and effectiveness in the state legislature and to continue to support our national legislative efforts throughout the year.

Eric Duffy, chair; Jordy Stringer; Todd Elzey; Debbie Baker; Annette Lutz; William Turner; Andra Stover; and Olivia Bump

**13. Membership Committee**

Charge: To implement effective strategies to recruit and retain members and to reinvigorate the chapters and divisions of the NFB-O.

Carolyn Peters, chair; Maggie Stringer; Dianna Labiche; Kinshuk Tella; Pat McPherson; Dave Perry; and William Turner

**14. Promotion and Publicity and NEWSLINE Committee**

Charge: To assist in updating the content of the NEWSLINE service as well as promoting and advertising NEWSLINE. Members on this committee should be proficient computer users. They should develop content and suggest creative ways to promote NFB-O branding. Responsibilities include researching audience preferences and discovering current trends; creating engaging text, images, and video content; designing posts to sustain readers’ curiosity and creating buzz around current issues; staying up to date with changes in all social platforms ensuring maximum effectiveness; and training leaders in ways to use social media constructively and consistently; and overseeing all state social media accounts.

Todd Elzey, Chair; Maggie Stringer; and Macy McClain

**15. Resolutions Committee**

Charge: To oversee the submission process and to write and distribute clearly articulated and philosophically sound resolutions.

Todd Elzey, chair; Debbie Baker;Barbara Pierce; Macy McClain; Andra Stover

**16. Scholarship Committee**

Charge: To conduct the affiliate scholarship program and to develop and implement effective strategies to increase the visibility of and participation in the state and national programs.

Jordy Stringer, Chair; Kinshuk Tella; and Jessica Stover

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# **Editor’s Musingsby Barbara Pierce**

Over Labor Day weekend 1975 I made my first independent flight as an adult. I changed planes in Chicago, and I was very nervous. I was on my way to Des Moines, Iowa to the headquarters of the National Federation of the Blind for a leadership training seminar. Anyone who has attended such a seminar knows what a profound experience it was. I remember being very sad on my way home because I doubted that I would ever again spend time at the NFB national headquarters. I could not have been more wrong.

Though I believe that I made only a trip or two back to Des Moines, I cannot count the number of times that I have visited the National Center for the Blind, now referred to as the Jernigan Institute, since we purchased the property at 1800 Johnson Street in 1978. We moved our headquarters to Baltimore, Maryland, when Ralph Sanders was elected president in July of 1977.

I did not see the property before we began the renovations. But the 1978 national convention was in Baltimore, and we seized the opportunity to provide tours of the national office to everyone who wanted to tour the office and pick their way around the other, unremodeled floors of the building. Pat Eschbach was in charge of feeding lunch to the hundreds of people who rode buses from the hotel to tour the Johnson Street property. Several of us were tapped to study cassette tape descriptions of the four floors of the old factory building and especially of the dozen or so offices that we had remodeled. The remodeled section of the building stretched from the Johnson Street entrance on the fourth floor south to the fire doors that later opened into the bedroom section of the fourth floor. This included the fourth floor conference room that still looks the same today. Across the hall, where the recording studio is now located, was the dining room/kitchen. I was one of the guides, and it was certainly an effective way to learn the layout of the building.

I have been around for every remodeling project since that first effort. The most recent was the reworking of the north section of the fourth floor. It was completed just before the pandemic. In this new area there are about twenty bedrooms, a laundry room, an exercise room, a kitchen and lounge with work areas to use computers, as well as a lovely living room with a free-standing fireplace. The large dining room is adjacent to the living room, and the large kitchen is unchanged. All of the bedrooms have windows and bathrooms with walk-in showers. I had just begun to learn my way around this area when Bob and I were present for the board meeting in early December 2019. The Jernigan Institute, like most of the rest of the country, was shut down the following March.

We returned this December for the Board meeting and the contributors’ reception. Members Hall, the extremely large meeting space on the fourth floor of the new part of the building, was decorated for Christmas. We have a number of very large Christmas tree decorations that hang on the walls. Members’ Hall was divided in half. The part nearest the fourth floor atrium had both standing and sit-down tables. Baltimore and Maryland leaders who support the NFB were invited as well as a number of NFB leaders. After the reception we went to the other side of Members’ Hall, where the presidential release was broadcast. We were all seated socially distanced and wearing masks.

The next morning after a very tasty breakfast, we moved into a large conference room in the Jernigan Institute. This was the first time that the Board meeting had not been conducted in the fourth floor conference room. We could be socially distanced. Everyone was vaccinated or had had Covid testing. Four or five of the Board members took part in the meeting by Zoom. Everyone else was masked. The meeting lasted two days and was sometimes difficult. But it was clear that everyone was really glad to be back together and determined to keep ourselves and each other safe.

Sunday morning came all too quickly. It was a Board meeting like no other, but it was in a marvelous facility. It was great to return home, but it had been wonderful to be at the Jernigan Institute again.

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# **Bells Will Be Ringing in Columbus in 2022by Eric Duffy**

Editor’s note: Eric Duffy will be conducting the in-person BELL Program this coming year. We welcome him back after several years. Here is what he has to say about next summer’s program for blind children:

It is early December as I write. The winter weather is here, and the sounds of Christmas are in the air. It is hard to imagine the activities of summer already, but, when it comes to the Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning (BELL) Program, there is no time to waste. Details are just beginning to be worked out, but we are already excited about the idea of bringing blind children ages four to twelve together in Columbus for a week of learning and fun. When we first started this program in Ohio in the summer of 2013, we thought it was all about teaching Braille. Of course teaching these children Braille is a big part of what we do, but we do much more than that. We teach cane travel, beginning cooking skills, money identification, and much more. But the best thing we give them is love and confidence. They are not our biological children, but they are our spiritual children. They are the next generation of blind leaders.

Even at a young age the children are amazed when they learn that we are blind and that we are doing all of the things that we are expecting them to learn to do. Everyone in the program is on equal footing when it comes to vision, because even our sighted volunteers wear learning shades. We are showing the kids that everyone can learn and do things without vision. There is no doubt in my mind that they internalize this during the week they spend with us. We challenge the children to step out of their comfort zones, and we often challenge our volunteers to do the same.

Although arrangements are just beginning to be made, we expect that the program will once again be held at the Ohio State School for the Blind in Columbus. The children will come in on a Sunday afternoon and leave early Friday afternoon. As soon as we have finalized the date with the school, we will let you know. There are two things you can do to help now. Spread the word about the program. Let families with blind and low-vision children know about it. Spread the word among educators and others working with blind children. Also do what you can to help us raise money to conduct the program. Conduct fund raisers in your chapters and divisions, and reach out to community organizations. Federation leaders will be happy to help you present this program in your community.

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# **2022 Washington Seminar and Ohio Legislative Updateby Todd Elzey**

Editor’s note: Todd Elzey is the treasurer of the NFB of Ohio and an active member of the Ohio Legislative Committee. Here is a valuable article about the 2022 Washington Seminar and a summary of the Ohio state legislative picture. All bill numbers and titles are present, so keep this article for future reference. This is what Todd says:

The 2022 Washington Seminar will be held Monday, February 7, 2022, through Thursday, February 10, 2022. Although the COVID-19 pandemic will still have an impact on how this year’s Washington Seminar will be run, the NFB is pleased that we will return to some in-person meetings in Washington D.C.

But despite returning to Washington D.C. for some meetings, this year’s Washington Seminar will still be very different from our traditional legislative education efforts. Because of COVID-19, the U.S. Capitol remains on restricted operations. This means that you cannot enter the Capitol without having an appointment with a legislative office. In addition, appointments will require more coordination than usual because visitors must be escorted in and out of the building. Because of these requirements and the social distancing guidelines needed at our Washington Seminar hotel, the national office has had to limit the number of members from each affiliate who can attend the event. Ohio has been allocated 6 attendees, which is the second highest number of participants from the 50 states.

Although it is disappointing that we can’t take a full contingent to D.C. for the 2022 Washington Seminar, the national office has developed an event format that will help us ensure that we can get to as many offices as possible and allow anyone who is willing and able to participate in the event. The 2022 Washington Seminar will be a hybrid event. In this version of our Washington Seminar, while the six-person team is conducting in-person meetings in D.C., our virtual team will be holding Zoom calls with legislative offices who for one reason or another are not holding in-person meetings. So, it will take all of us to pull of this Hybrid event.

This year both the in-person and virtual teams will address four legislative issues with Ohio’s Congressional delegation. The four issues are:

1. The Access Technology Affordability Act (H.R. 431/S. 212). The Access Technology Affordability Act would provide a refundable tax credit for those who purchase access technology such as screen reader software, Braille displays, and similar software and devices.

2. The Medical Device Nonvisual Accessibility Act (H.R.4853)–This legislation would create a process to ensure that all home medical devices are accessible to the blind.

3. The Twenty-First Century Website and Application Accessibility Act–This proposal would require that all websites and mobile applications be designed so that they are accessible to the blind.

4. The Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act (H.R. 2373/S. 3238)–This legislation would permanently eliminate the exemption in the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) that permits some employers to pay blind and other disabled workers less than the minimum wage.

The NFB will host an issue training and mock meeting session on Monday, February 7, 2022, from 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. The issue training will be followed by the Great Gathering-In at 5:00 P.M. The training and mock meeting, the Great Gathering-In, and the Tuesday and Wednesday evening follow-up briefings will be held in a hybrid format so that both in-person and virtual team members can participate in all of them.

President Payne has selected the eight individuals who will travel to Washington D.C. They are Richard Payne, Eric Duffy, Todd Elzey, Kinshuk Tella, Emily Kiehl, Delcenia Brown, Jordy Stringer, and Caroline Carbowski.

We also still need to build our virtual meeting team. If you are interested in participating as a member of the Ohio virtual Washington Seminar team, please contact Legislative Chair Eric Duffy at peduffy63@gmail.com.

We have also been hard at work on our Ohio legislation. Our parental rights legislation in the House, H.B. 352, was passed out of the House Civil Justice Committee on November 17, 2021, by a vote of 11-2. The two votes no were Representative Al Cutrona and Representative Brian Stewart. Cutrona is a Republican from District 59, which covers most of Mahoning County. Stewart is a first-term Republican from District 78, which covers Hocking and Morgan Counties and portions of Athens, Fairfield, Muskingum, and Pickaway Counties.

H.B. 352 then passed the House on December 8, 2021, on a 90-1 vote. The sole vote no was Stewart. Representative Cutrona switched his vote to a Yes vote on the floor.

You can view the archived video of the house vote at https://ohiochannel.org/video/ohio-house-of-representatives-12-8-2021 H.B. 352 appears about 1 hour and 52 minutes and 14 seconds into the video. Representative Tavia Galonski presented the bill on the floor. Representative Sharon Ray also spoke in support of the bill. There was no presentation in opposition. The whole presentation lasted about five minutes, and at the end a number of Legislators added their names as co-sponsors.

The final co-sponsor list is:

Representatives: Cindy Abrams; Brian Baldridge; Willis E. Blackshear, Jr.; Kristin Boggs; Janine R. Boyd; Juanita O. Brent; Richard D. Brown; Jamie Callender; Rick Carfagna; Sara P. Carruthers; Gary Click; Rodney Creech; Jeffrey A. Crossman; Sedrick Denson; Sarah Fowler Arthur; Tavia Galonski; Haraz N. Ghanbari; Timothy E. Ginter; Diane V. Grendell; Jennifer Gross; Paula Hicks-Hudson; Brett Hudson Hillyer; James M. Hoops; Stephanie D. Howse; Latyna M. Humphrey; Catherine D. Ingram; Dontavious Jarrells; Marilyn S. John; Don Jones; Brigid Kelly; Brian E. Lampton; David Leland; Michele Lepore Hagan; Mary Lightbody; P. Scott Lipps; Beth Liston; Mike Loychik; Gayle Manning; Adam C. Miller; Joseph A. Miller III; Jessica E. Miranda; Michael J. O'Brien; Gail K. Pavliga; Phil Plummer; Graig S. Riedel/ C. Allison Russo; Bill Seitz; Kent Smith; Monique Smith; Lisa A. Sobecki; Dick Stein; Bride Rose Sweeney; Emilia Strong Sykes; Terrence Upchurch; Casey Weinstein; Thomas West; Andrea White; and Tom Young.

Our next job is to get our Senate companion bill, S.B. 202, through the Senate. The bill is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill has already received a Sponsor and Proponent hearing. Our next step is to get the Committee to hold its final hearings and pass the bill out to the Senate Floor. Once the bill is passed in the Senate, it would then go to the Governor for consideration. At this point we believe that there is a very good possibility that we will have a Parental Rights law enacted in Ohio sometime during 2022.

We are also promoting H.B. 448, our Accessible Prescription Labeling bill in the House. Our House Sponsor for H.B. 448 is Representative Richard Brown (D) District 20. We also have 12 cosponsors who signed on to the bill. H.B. 448 has been assigned to the House Insurance Committee Chaired by Representative Thomas E. Brinkman, Jr. (R) District 27. The Insurance Committee initially scheduled a Sponsor hearing for H.B. 448 for December 8, 2021. Unfortunately, the Committee had to cancel that meeting. We anticipate that H.B. 448 will receive its first hearing sometime in early January 2022.

We also expect that the Insurance Committee will hold a Proponent hearing for H.B. 448 soon after the Sponsor hearing. This means that we need to begin preparing our testimony for that Proponent hearing right away. We recently had a very productive meeting with Representative Brown. He has suggested that our testimony focus on two key issues.

First, we want to focus on how having accessible prescription labels makes taking medications safer. In particular, we want to provide the Insurance Committee with personal examples of either how it is not safe for you to take medicine without accessible labeling, or of how having accessible labeling has made taking prescription medications safer for you or those you care for. One type of great example is if you previously made mistakes taking medication without accessible labeling, but can now take medications safely because of accessible labeling.

The second issue we want to discuss is the lack of access to accessible labeling. Access issues can include such things as having your local pharmacy refusing to provide accessible labeling. Another type of issue might be that you are unable to use a pharmacy that provides accessible labeling because of your insurance coverage (i.e. plan provider limitations).

We will be pushing hard to get H.B. 448 passed during 2022 as part of the 134th General Assembly. As part of that effort, we are working on securing a sponsor for a Senate companion bill. But we should start contacting our legislative offices right away to make them aware of H.B. 448 and why they should support it. The affiliate is also partnering with En-Vision America, Inc. to develop social and traditional media campaigns to promote passage of H.B. 448. For that campaign we are looking for members who are willing to tell their stories about accessible prescription labeling for videos and news stories. If you would be willing to participate in this campaign, please email me at toddelzey@gmaiil.com

While the Legislative Committee continues to work hard to promote these legislative priorities, we can only accomplish our goal of getting both the Parental Rights and Accessible Prescription Labeling passed in 2022 with your help. Legislators need to hear your personal stories of why these bills are important. So we ask that you contact your State Senator to ask for their support of our Parental Rights Legislation S.B. 202. We also ask that you contact your House Representative to get their support for H.B. 448. Please report your contact and any response you receive to Legislative Chairman Eric Duffy at peduffy63@gmail.com. If you have any difficulty determining who your Senator or House Representative is, reach out to me at toddelzey@gmail.com or Eric, and we will help you find your legislator.

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# **Emotional Support Animalsby Marianne Denning**

Editor’s note: This is Marianne’s second article. In the last issue she wrote about service animals. Marianne is a guide dog user herself. This is what she says:

In my last article I provided information about service animals. In this article I will provide information about emotional support animals.

Emotional support animals are not covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The primary government agency that protects people with emotional support animals is the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). According to HUD, service animals and emotional support animals are referred to as “assistance animals.” The primary difference is that service animals have been trained to complete a specific task and emotional support animals are not. Emotional support animals can provide comfort to a person with a disability and make it possible for the individual to participate in all areas of life in housing. According to HUD guidelines, any animal can be an emotional support animal. The guidelines covering emotional support animals are covered under the Fair Housing Act. An emotional support animal does not need to be trained to complete a specific task.

The Fair Housing Act prevents discrimination against persons with disabilities, among other covered minorities. You cannot be charged an additional fee for an emotional support animal, and the animal is allowed into individual housing and all public areas. This covers tenants and people who are visiting a tenant. You can find specific information on the HUD website. If people want to bring emotional support animals into any housing covered by the Fair Housing Act, they must notify the owner or housing office of the disability and provide information from a doctor identifying the need for an emotional support animal. Types of housing include nursing homes, dorms, apartment complexes, condos, private homes, and other types of housing. They do not include hotels or four-unit buildings if the owner occupies one of the units. Are you confused yet? If so, I strongly recommend working with someone who can help you through the process.

In the past emotional support animals have been allowed on airplanes, but that changed in late 2020. Too many people were taking advantage of this to take pets on airlines. The major change is that psychiatric service animals must still be allowed on planes, but these animals can only be dogs and must be trained to perform a specific task. Psychiatric service animals are also covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act. There are requirements under the Air Carrier Access Act that cover all types of service animals.

I will give a very brief example of the difference between service animals and emotional support animals. If you live in an apartment complex and have a service animal, a dog or miniature horse, that animal is allowed to go to all public areas of the complex and anywhere you travel outside of the complex. If you have an emotional support animal, it is allowed to accompany you anywhere in the complex but may not be allowed in areas away from the complex.

This is a brief overview of emotional support animals and where they are allowed. It can be confusing. If you have further questions, you can contact me at marianne@denningweb.com.

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# **Article from the Ohio State Website**

Editor’s note: The following piece appeared on the Ohio State website this fall. It highlight’s the work of our Ruth Garwood Award winner last year, Caroline Karbowski. Caroline is an active member of our Capital Chapter. Here is the article:

As a freshman at Ohio State, Caroline Karbowski found the support to launch her nonprofit company See3D. Karbowski, now a senior, and Garrett Carder, a senior computer science major, first pitched the idea for See3D to Ohio State’s Innovation Studio. Carder is still on the See3D Board and is a student manager at the Innovation Studio.

Caroline Karbowski’s first breakthrough at Ohio State started with a simple conversation with a new friend in a dining hall. The conversation grew out of need and curiosity–she needed to find someone outside her science major to help pitch her See3D startup idea to Ohio State’s Innovation Studio, a maker space housed in Ohio State's College of Nursing and open to all students, faculty, and staff.

At the studio she saw an opportunity to fund and sustain her organization. Until that point See3D had been a high school project in which she 3D printed and distributed models of everything from Disney castles to snowflakes to butterflies to those who are blind or have low vision. Those who are visually impaired can use the models to form their own observations without relying on other people’s descriptions.

But to make that initial pitch to the Innovation Studio, she needed someone outside biology, her field of study, because the studio mandates interdisciplinary connections. So it was off to the dining hall, where she met Garrett Carder, a computer science major, and inspired him with her ideas for See3D. He joined her pitch and even remodeled the company’s website. One pitch later Karbowski and her first team member had seed-funding along with what became ongoing guidance and advice for the Innovation Studio. It was the beginning of an impressive journey.

“It’s been an adventure in networking and exploring the opportunities that have arisen,” said Karbowski, a senior biology major with minors in American Sign Language and chemistry and the president of Ohio State’s Deaf-Hearing Club (DHOSU). “Ohio State has given me the support and connections to continue to pursue my interests in accessibility, which I didn’t even know was a career path until I came here.”

Four years after that initial pitch, See3D is an ever-expanding nonprofit organization with a large group of team members from Ohio State and throughout the nation. Collaborators and partners from other countries such as Germany and France have also joined the mission.

 It’s a company that promotes accessibility in many ways, including those 3D-printed models, of which her team has distributed over 1,400 in twenty-four states and ten countries.

This 3D-printed model helps students who are blind understand the DNA double helix. DNA is a common biology topic from middle school to college, but, without models like these, students who are blind or with low vision have to rely on the observations and descriptions of others.

Karbowski’s most popular models center on human anatomy, which has welcomed more blind students to pursue STEM subjects.

“What Caroline and See3D does is important in the way we approach education and science in general,” said Kayden Gill, a senior health sciences major and president of Buckeyes for Accessibility, who also has low vision. “The whole question, ‘what do you want to be when you grow up,’ is based on options presented to you. Blind children don’t find a lot of themselves in the STEM community. So introducing ways that can get them interested at an early age shapes that mental image of themselves and opens a lot of doors.”

Why Ohio State? In sixth grade Karbowski taught herself Braille so that she could read on car rides without getting dizzy. She fell in love with Braille and discovered other ways to use it. One of those ways was using Braille on tactile models for the blind.

In high school, she learned how to use 3D printers to make those models and created her See3D project, distributing the models to people around Cincinnati and displaying them at maker and tech showcases. But to take See3D to another level, Karbowski needed a university that offered the right mix of education, people, and resources—specifically 3D printing and startup support. Ohio State was a bull’s-eye.

One of the people she met in high school was Tiffany Wild, an Ohio State assistant professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning who researches access and equity, including 3D printing for the blind and visually impaired.

“We talked about all the possibilities Ohio State offered and how those experiences could impact the trajectory of her career,” Wild said. “I’m blown away with everything she’s done. She took full advantage of everything Ohio State has to offer…. She’s well on her way to really impacting the world in ways I don’t’ even think she can fathom right now.”

Karbowski’s most popular models center on human anatomy, which has welcomed more blind students to pursue STEM subjects. Kayden Gill, a senior health sciences major and president of Buckeyes for Accessibility, who also has low vision, believes efforts like See3D and Buckeyes for Accessibility open a lot of doors to the STEM community.

More than anything, Karbowski wanted 3D printing and support for startups. She found both at the Innovation Studio, which she visited on a tour of campus. “After visiting it,” she recalled, “I was ecstatic.” After her first pitch and the subsequent funding for See3D, the studio also began guiding Karbowski in building and sustaining the organization.

“When we started the Innovation Studio, we wanted to be the answer to the question, ‘I have a great idea. I just don’t know where to begin,’” said Tim Raderstorf, Innovation Studio founder and chief innovation officer in the College of Nursing.

Last year Raderstorf nominated Karbowski for Ohio State’s Next Generation Innovator of the Year, which she won.” Caroline came to Ohio State with impact in mind,” he said. “That level of positive ambition is what we look for in all our students.”

Along the way she’s accepted opportunities to speak and write about her organization and accessibility in general. Karbowski is a regular participant at SciAccess, an annual conference at Ohio State started by former student and former President’s Prize winner Anna Voelker to promote equity and inclusion in STEM.

And while being a student and a CEO keeps her hustling, the payoff is everything to Karbowski. “I get so excited when a blind student tells me they want to pursue biology because they touched the DNA model and now they’re excited about DNA,” Karbowski said. “We’re not just a service that provides models—we work on connecting the community and finding ways the world can be more accessible for blind people.”

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# **Recipes from Ohio Chefs**

Editor’s note: The indefatigable Suzanne Turner found five NFB-O members willing to offer a recipe and prepare the dish on Zoom. The original idea was that people would prepare the dish while the person in charge assembled the dish and gave directions and answered questions. I don’t know that anyone actually tried to prepare the dish at that time, but certainly people did try the recipes afterward. Here are the recipes. The first chef was Eric Duffy.

**Banana Pudding
by Eric Duffy**

Banana pudding has always been a Duffy family favorite. I don't remember holidays without it when I was growing up. Easter of 1994 was the last holiday I spent with my parents, and we had it then. I never made it myself until this Thanksgiving. I wanted banana pudding this year, and I knew the only way I was going to get it was to make it myself.

Ingredients:

1 5-ounce package instant vanilla pudding

2 cups cold milk

1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

1 12-ounce package Cool Whip, thawed

1 16-ounce box vanilla wafers

14 medium bananas, peeled and sliced

Method: In a large bowl combine instant pudding and cold milk. Beat for two minutes. Stir in sweetened condensed milk and vanilla extract. Gently fold in Cool Whip. In a large serving bowl line the bottom with vanilla wafers. Spoon in some of the pudding mixture. Arrange banana slices on top. Continue layering these three layers until all bananas and pudding are used. End with pudding or wafers. If the bananas are left on top open to the air, they will turn brown. Cover the bowl and chill until ready to serve.

**NFB Fudge
by Barbara Pierce**

Dianne McGeorge brought this recipe to the NFB. She brought it every year to the in-person board meeting at Thanksgiving. It is nearly failsafe, and it makes five pounds.

Ingredients:

4 1/2 cups sugar

1 stick margarine

1 large can (about 13 ounces) evaporated milk

12 ounces chocolate chips

1 8-ounce Hershey bar

1 7-ounce jar marshmallow cream or same amount miniature marshmallows

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Chopped nuts, optional

In large, heavy pan combine evaporated milk, margarine, and sugar. Bring to a boil, stirring pretty steadily. Reduce heat so that mixture very gently boils and stir frequently, cooking for 4 1/2 minutes. Remove pan from heat. Add chocolate chips, marshmallow cream, Hershey bar broken into pieces, nuts, and vanilla. Stir with wooden spoon until chocolate is completely melted and everything is well combined. Pour fudge into generously buttered 13-by-9-inch pan. Cool to room temperature. Cut in pieces before chilling. Remove from pan and store tightly covered in refrigerator.

**Maggie Mae’s Deviled Eggs**

Deviled eggs can be made a million and one ways. You can make substitutes for what you dislike or add more of what you love. It’s an appetizer you can have a lot of fun with. This recipe has come to be known along the East Coast as Maggie Mae’s Deviled Eggs.

Ingredients:

12 hard boiled eggs

Mayonnaise

Honey mustard

Relish

Pepper

Salt

Worcestershire sauce

Hot Sauce

Method: Use your favorite method for hard cooking the eggs. Cut the eggs in half lengthwise and remove the yolks and place in a bowl. Arrange the egg white shells on a serving plate or in a storage container. With a fork mash the yolks until smooth. Slowly add the mayonnaise, relish, and Worcestershire sauce until you have achieved a nice consistency. Use the remaining ingredients to achieve the taste you prefer. This requires much tasting, which is, after all, the fun of making deviled eggs. The final step is to fill the egg whites with the filling using a spoon. Chill eggs until you are ready to use them.

**Cheryl Fields’s Delicious and Simple Rum Cake**

Ingredients:

½ cup chopped walnuts or pecans

1 box yellow cake mix--brand name cake mix performs the best. (Try spice or

chocolate for a change, very good and tasty.)

1/2 cup rum (Experiment with different flavors of rum; choose your

favorite.)

4 large eggs

1/ 2 cup water

1/2 cup vegetable oil (Do not substitute other oils. It will affect the taste of cake.)

1 3.5 ounce package instant vanilla pudding mix, brand name mixes perform best (When using other flavors of cake mix, try lemon or chocolate pudding mix.)

Glaze Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter, no substitutions

1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) water

1/2 cup white sugar

1/4 cup rum--again choose your favorite flavor

Method: Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 350 degrees. Combine all ingredients except rum and nuts in large bowl and mix thoroughly using an electric mixer on medium setting. Add rum and gently stir or use mixer on low speed. Set bowl aside. Spray large Bundt pan with vegetable oil cooking spray.

Sprinkle nuts in bottom of Bundt pan and gently pour cake batter into pan and scrape sides of bowl. Place pan on center rack of preheated oven. (Do not skip pre-heating oven because it will affect cooking time and possibly quality of cake). Bake for one hour or until toothpick inserted in center of cake comes out clean. Remove cake from oven and place on wire rack to cool.

Prepare glaze: Combine sugar, water, and butter in a sauce pan, and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and add rum. Pour glaze over cake and serve.

**Candace Armstrong’s Tasty Buffalo Chicken Dip**

My family and I love all kinds of chicken dishes. We are even bigger fans of flavoring an ordinary dish with lots of zesty spices. A few years ago I learned about a popular delicious Buffalo chicken dip and knew I needed this recipe in my collection. Most recipes call for blue cheese, but my family doesn’t care for it, so I decided to add not one, but a few twists of my own. Since then it has become a family favorite, and we don’t have a gathering without this spicy dip!

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook Time 20 minutes

Ingredients:

2 cups shredded cooked chicken

1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened

½ cup Frank's RedHot Original Buffalo Wings Sauce

1 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded

½ cup ranch dressing

Method: Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix all ingredients in a large bowl. Spoon into shallow 1-quart baking dish. Bake 20 minutes or until mixture is heated through; stir. Sprinkle with green onions, if desired, and serve with chips, crackers, or cut up veggies.

**Delcenia Brown’s Chicken Broccoli Casserole**

Ingredients:

2 boneless skinless chicken breast halves

2 bags frozen broccoli florets

1 block each Colby Jack and Cheddar cheese slices

1 can cream of mushrooms soup

Milk

Bacon bits

Method: First wash and cut chicken breast into bite-size pieces and cook and set aside. I personally prefer to cook the chicken in my low-moisture pan with no oil. Pour the can of cream of mushroom soup into a small bowl and fill the empty can with milk to clean the soup out of can. Add milk to soup and mix well. Set aside. To assemble:

In an aluminum pan or casserole dish arrange the broccoli across the bottom. Next place cooked chicken pieces on top of broccoli. Now add the sliced cheese on top of the chicken. Then pour the cream of mushroom mixture on top Of cheese. Now sprinkle bacon bits on top. Place pan in 400 -degree oven for 45 minutes. (Could take an hour, depending on oven and how much milk you put into the mixture.) This is an easy dish to expand by adding more chicken and broccoli. Serve immediately.

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# **Activities Calendar**

Every Thursday at 7, Community Service happy hour, Ohio Zoom room

January 4, Presidential Release Live

January 4, Louis Braille’s birthday and World Braille Day

January 4-11, Braille Literacy Week

February 1, Presidential Release live

February 7-10, Washington Seminar

March 1, Presidential Release live

March 1, Opening convention registration

March 31, Deadline national scholarship program

May 31 Deadline convention registration

July 5-10, National convention, New Orleans, Louisiana