



NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND
KANSAS

Live the life you want.

TAP TRACKS

**The Newsletter of the National Federation
of the Blind of Kansas**

Autumn / Winter 2021

**Tom Page, Nicole Taylor,
Associate Editors**

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to:

Donna Wood

donnajwood@cox.net

11405 W. Grant

Wichita, KS 67209

From the President

By Tom Page

Greetings Kansas federationists and friends! I am excited to share that we will be meeting in person in Overland Park Kansas for our 2021 state convention! We have all endured this time of pandemic and it seems that most of us are ready to be together and enthusiastic to participate in our normal time of communion, collaboration, and celebration.

A person who is not involved with our movement might ask: “What could you possibly have to celebrate?” In the past I would chalk up such a question to the fundamental misunderstanding of blindness that is so pervasive in our society. The pandemic has certainly presented new challenges that would produce questions of this nature.

Blind Kansans have faced the same fears, anxieties and struggles that people around the world have grappled with since the beginning of the pandemic. In some respects we can be thankful that as Americans we have had access to the best information and solutions to the problems the pandemic has posed. We are also lucky to have the ability to organize in the National Federation of the Blind. This uniquely American institution has allowed us to strategize, complain, mourn, and encourage each other during this stressful time.

Where the pandemic has revealed problems in systems the NFB has helped us come up with solutions. We are actively engaged at local, state, and regional levels in efforts to mitigate problems that have been revealed or made worse by the pandemic. These relate

to voting, medical access, and transportation issues. To learn more about these activities please consider attending our 2021 convention either in person or via the zoom meeting platform. To do so please complete the registration form at the end of this mailing and return it ASAP!

I look forward to being with all of you in Overland Park this November!

Invitation to the 2021 State Convention

By Donna Wood

The National Federation of the Blind of Kansas would like to invite you to join us for our 52nd annual State Convention. We will be gathering together in person and virtually November 12, 13 and 14, 2021. In person will be held at The Holiday Inn and Suites Overland Park West 8787 Reeder Rd, Overland Park, KS 66214. For reservations call (913) 888-8440. Room rates are \$109 per night. This does include breakfast. If you plan to join us virtually, please note this on your registration form. You will then be provided a Zoom link by e-mail. The hotel is following strict covid guidelines, rooms are cleaned thoroughly, meeting spaces are arranged so that social distancing can be allowed and a mask mandate may be in place.

Convention begins on Friday, November 12th at noon. Registration will be from noon to 1:00 PM, at 1:00 PM begins the Technology seminar, 5:00 PM registration and Hospitality, 7:00 PM Resolutions and immediately following will be Nominating Committee. Saturday, November 13th General Session will begin at 9:00 AM. At Noon we will break for lunch which will be

sponsored by Nanopac. The Seniors Division will break out at Noon for their business meeting. At 1:15 PM we will reassemble for the afternoon General Session, adjourning at 5:00 PM. Happy Hour will begin at 6:00 PM followed at 7:00 PM by the Banquet, immediately following we will be entertained by the music of Easy Pieces. Sunday, November 14th begins at 7:00 AM with the In Communities of Faith breakfast. Then at 9:00 AM we will convene for the NFBKS business meeting. The convention will adjourn around Noon.

This year's National Rep. will be Kevan Worley. As some of you may remember Kevan was our National Rep. in Emporia in 2008. We look forward to welcoming him back to Kansas. There is an article included in this newsletter written by Kevan Worley, that appeared in the Braille Monitor in 2004. It is not a comprehensive look at Kevan's life, but I think it will give you some insight into him.

This has been a tough couple of years for the NFBKS. We have had very few in person chapter meetings and the decision was made by the board to have an all-virtual state convention last year, because of Covid. We are in hopes that this year we are able to come together in person. Since we do not know what the future will bring it is possible, if the Covid numbers continue to rise we may again have to go to an all-virtual convention. If this happens you will be notified as soon as possible in the following ways; an announcement will go out on home-on-the-range, the website, Facebook and chapter and division meetings. We will hope for the best. Everyone stay well, stay safe and go out and "LIVE THE LIFE YOU WANT".

The Ties That Bind

by Kevan Worley

Kevan Worley lives in Aurora, Colorado. He is president of the National Association of Blind Merchants. In his story, "The Ties That Bind," Kevan shares with us a vivid picture of the loving family environment in which he grew up. We come to see, however, that something more than the richness of his family's love was needed. He found that something in the National Federation of the Blind.

Here is Kevan's story:

It's funny the things you remember from your childhood. Sitting in my office comparing long-distance rates, I found myself daydreaming about a family trip we took when I was five or six. We were always on some sort of adventure, vacation, outing, or transfer.

My father, Sergeant Jim Worley, was transferred every year or two, and no matter where we were, he made sure we saw the sights: Arizona to France, Kansas to Germany. This particular trip was to South Bend, Indiana, to visit my father's parents--loving people, who adopted him from an orphanage when he was five. They were members of the same Protestant denomination as my mother's family, and both sets of parents raised their children with a strong sense of family and church. If there were relatives within three hundred miles, there was no way we would miss seeing them.

My mom and dad met at a church camp when they were in their late teens. They married not long after high school graduation. My dad then joined the army and was sent to Bad Kreuznach, Germany, where I was born in 1956. My mother endured sixteen

hours of labor in a hospital far from any family except her husband. When I finally entered the world after a difficult delivery, I was totally blind. But that is the start of another, longer story. This story is about a daydream and the way memories tie your life together and make you whole.

We were traveling from Ft. Hachuca, Arizona, to Ft. Sheridan, Illinois, when Dad decided to detour to South Bend to see his parents. The detour itself meant little to me. What was important was the new suits my brother and I were wearing and the chance for others to see us in them. My parents had bought them for us to wear to church, but these were no ordinary church suits. These were western outfits, complete with bolo ties. The bolo string ties were the neatest things my little hands had ever seen. I was fascinated by the metal-feeling tips and the way the round turquoise bolo moved up and down like a pulley. Better yet was the way my relatives would ooh and aah over my appearance. I was stylin'. But perhaps the coolest part of all was that I could put the tie on myself. The knots on my father's ties remained a mystery to me despite my best efforts, but the bolo tie was mine to put on or remove as I wished.

It's funny the things you remember--the way memories seem tied to one another, connecting people and events in ways you never quite expect. Years after I had outgrown the western suit, while I was attending fourth grade at the Illinois residential school for the blind, my grandfather on my mother's side passed away. He had been a wonderful man, and I was very sad.

The social worker called me to his office to give me the news. He kindly explained that Mrs. Bishop, my favorite housemother, had packed my suit and would take me to the bus station. I would catch a bus to Lincoln, where my relatives would meet me and take me to the funeral the next day. My ears perked up at the mention of

my relatives, because I knew I would get to stay at my Aunt Betty's house. I was very sad, but fourth graders have their priorities, and my Aunt Betty made the best French toast of anyone in the world.

The next morning, after ten slices of French toast, I had to put on my suit and prepare for the funeral. Well, somehow Mrs. Bishop had found and packed a regular long men's tie, not a clip-on tie. I was confused. I wanted to look nice for the funeral to make my mom and grandma proud of me, but I didn't know how to tie a tie. I was all mixed up and embarrassed, fumbling with this long tie and thinking of my grandpa and how much I would miss him.

When I was four, he and my grandma had driven me from their home in Ottawa, Illinois, to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. They were hoping the great doctors at that world-famous clinic could restore my sight. I don't think I cared very much about being able to see. What I remember was the trip in my grandpa's Nash, wrestling with him at the motel every night before bedtime, and his buying me a cup of coffee. My grandma said, "Don't you give my Kevie-Dale coffee! It will stunt his growth!"

My grandpa was a union man, a shop steward at Libby Owens Ford. He got up very early to go to work at the factory. When I was visiting them, he would leave me something to find in his lunch pail when he came home from work. Then we would watch "Highway Patrol" or "Wagon Train" together.

When I was very little, about three, he took me by the hand to run around the backyard. While we were running, I stepped on a bee. I've heard family stories that he felt terrible about it. I always figured it was all right to feel a little bad about your grandson stepping on a bee. After all, it was a painful experience. But I learned that he was upset because I was a little blind boy, and he thought he should have been more cautious with me.

Knowing that hurt, because I wouldn't have wanted him to be any more cautious. Roughhousing with Grandpa was when I forgot about caution and lost myself in the fun of being alive. Those were the times I was free to be fearless and unrestrained and full of laughter. Caution was something I experienced from most of the adults in my life, but with Grandpa I could just be a playful little boy.

My Aunt Betty eventually found me a clip-on tie. After she handed it to me, she mumbled, "That school! Why would they send a blind kid home with a regular tie?" I remember thinking that a clip-on tie was good enough for a nine-year-old, and I wanted to mumble back, "Why don't you let me cut my own French toast? They do at school."

It's funny the way one recollection leads to another as I sit here daydreaming. In high school I once got my father to show me how to tie a tie. Now my dad, the gung-ho first sergeant that he was, truly believed that I should be able to do anything and that blindness should not stop me. This time, however, his impatience or mine kept the lesson from going very far. I took the tie he tied, pulled the knot down, and kept it tied all the time. Eventually the knot became grungy looking and crooked, but it served my purpose.

Teenage sons and their fathers have peculiar relationships, so I never asked him to show me again. I realize now he would gladly have taken the time. I guess I always thought there was a huge gulf between my dad and me--the two-tour Vietnam soldier and his war-moratorium son. It's a funny thing though; Dad flew out to see me wrestle many times.

Once during my freshman year of high school, he was in transit to a new duty station and popped in to visit me at the school for the blind. We went to see Alice's Restaurant, the Arlo Guthrie anti-

draft film. He said he liked it and even laughed in a couple of places, but I doubt he really liked it very much. Infact I'm not sure that I would think much of it now, thirty years later. Maybe I should have spent that time with him learning to tie a tie. No, that would not have been cool. As a young man I sometimes found myself all tied up inside, masking my deficiencies by acting cool. I had difficulty untangling my high expectations from the lower ones set by family, friends, and teachers. I don't know how much of that confusion was part of growing up blind and how much was normal teenage angst.

Many years later, after I found the National Federation of the Blind and attended one of our great training centers to untangle those insecurities, I had a conversation with Dr. Marc Maurer in his office at the National Center for the Blind in Baltimore. He mentioned that he wore a necktie to school every day when he attended Notre Dame University.

By the time of this conversation, I had found some success as a businessman and community activist, but even so I remember thinking, "You wore a tie in the early seventies, every day at college? What a nerd!" But then I caught myself and thought, "No, what strength of character. What sense of self not to be distracted by a false need to impress, to cover up, to fit in."

Maybe that's why Dr. Maurer was the president of the largest, most dynamic organization of blind people in the world. Perhaps that is why he became a successful lawyer and why he is well known as a teacher, advocate, and role model. While some of that strength of character must have come from inside himself and from his family, I suspect he would give much of the credit to Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, his mentor and teacher. I imagine Dr. Jernigan helped Marc Maurer untangle his doubts about what a blind man could become with brains, drive, pride, and humility. Maybe Dr. Jernigan

taught the young Marc Maurer how to tie a tie. I don't know. I've never asked.

I know who finally taught me: Ray McGeorge, a founding member of the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado. I met him at the Colorado Center for the Blind, an adjustment-to-blindness training center for adults, founded on Federation philosophy. It was blind people training blind people--the kind of role modeling that has made our NFB training centers so successful at changing lives. Ray's wife Diane, founder of the Colorado Center, reached out and persuaded me to give the center a try.

Up until that point I'd bounced around quite a bit--from radio job to rock-and-roll band, from short attempts at college to long stretches of unemployment and occasional part-time telemarketing. It wasn't until I was thirty-two years old that the NFB's Colorado Center gave me the opportunity to confront my failures, my self-doubt, and my lack of understanding about myself as a person who happened to be blind.

At the center I learned alternative techniques of living as a blind person. But even more than that, I was made whole by those who, through their example, showed me it was respectable to be blind. They taught me I could have a full, competitive, and happy life if I chose to go after it. Whether I was rock climbing or making a quiche, job shadowing or teaching blind high school students to light a campfire, even cooking a turkey dinner for thirty all by myself, they were there to support me. They built me up when I doubted my ability and got me going again when I faltered. And Ray McGeorge made me tie a tie.

A group of students and I were heading out to the bus stop, talking about the things we wished we had learned as blind children. I casually mentioned wishing I had learned to tie a tie. Ray

McGeorge overheard and said, "I can teach you to do that right now."

As I hurried away from the center, I told him I would appreciate the lesson. Perhaps we could get together sometime before I graduated. Ray replied slowly, drawing out his words as he always does, "I don't see why we can't get started right now." It was past 4:30 in the afternoon, and I was ready to get back to the apartment. Ray was saying, "I'll see if we can't find a tie around here, and we'll just fix you right up." He's retired now, but at that time he had been a machinist for about thirty-five years. I was sure he must be tired from a hard day at work and certainly he would not be able to find a tie. But as I stepped up to the bus stop on Broadway, I heard Ray's distinct low voice behind me. "Come on, Kevan, this shouldn't take long. Let's get to it." With busses going by every ten minutes, Ray stood behind me, patiently showing me how to make the knot. He had me do it until I not only got it right but could do it again and again. "We need to do it so you will never forget this time," he said. And then he added, "Maybe someday you will show some other young man how to tie a tie."

It's funny the way the people, events, and lessons of a life fuse to create the person you become. I am now the project manager for M & K Food Service in Aurora, Colorado. I wear a tie every day. In fact, over the past six or seven years in the food business, I have collected over a hundred food-related ties. I enjoy collecting them, tying them so the knot is just right. It's a matter of pride and self-respect in a simple, very basic way.

It's good to look back and discover that the bonds you've made with others are what tie your life together--bonds like those with my parents and grandparents, and the teachers and house parents at the school for the blind, who did have love and expectations. And I'll never forget Dr. Kenneth Jernigan and Dr. Marc Maurer, who

each took a personal interest in me, counseling me and helping me set standards.

Of course there's Diane McGeorge, the dynamic blind lady of my parents' generation who set out to teach us to know and accept ourselves. And then there's Ray McGeorge, who said, "We are going to teach you to tie this tie, no matter how long it takes, and even if you would rather get on the bus." I find myself thinking of Ray almost every morning as I tie my tie and head out the door for work. Ray reminds me of my grandpa, a man of quiet strength, wit, and patience. Ray was a factory man, too. Not long ago I taught two young boys how to tie a tie before their first job interviews, sharing some of Ray's knowledge and confidence, passing along to others a little of the love, self-esteem, and zest for life the Federation has so generously given to me.

The NFB, through all of its people, teaches lessons big and small about what blindness is, what it is not, and what it can be. Whether changing society's misconceptions or inspiring a young man through the act of teaching him to tie a tie on a street corner as the next bus rolls by, that's how a family of blind and sighted people work together to share the ties that bind.

Johnson-Wyandotte Chapter Update

By Tom Anderson

In February, 2021, five members of the chapter participated in meetings with the Kansas congressional delegation via ZOOM conference. We spoke with congressional staff regarding four proposed bills which we wished to have introduced in Congress. They are: The Access Technology Affordability Act, Medical

Device Nonvisual Accessibility Act, Americans with Disabilities Voting Rights Act, and the Twenty-first Century Mobile Apps and Website Accessibility Act. The Access Technology Affordability Act has been introduced in both houses of Congress with one cosponsor from Kansas: Senator Jerry Moran. The Medical Device Nonvisual Accessibility Act was introduced in July of this year. The two other proposed bills have not been introduced in Congress as yet.

Over the past several months, the National Federation of the Blind has given considerable attention to the matter of Diversity and Inclusion in general, and the problem of sexual harassment and nonconsensual sexual attention at NFB training centers and at NFB conventions. President Page has appointed a Diversity and Inclusion Committee for Kansas chaired by Emily Schlenker. The other members of this committee are: Renae Morgan, Susan Tabor, and Tom Anderson. Members of this committee spoke briefly at our February meeting.

Two of our chapter members: Susie Stanzel and Tom Anderson participated in training conducted by the RAIN (Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network.). This training took place in March and April and was hosted by the NFB national office.

Tom Anderson also participated in an Implicit Bias workshop conducted by the National office in March, 2021.

At the April meeting, Susie Stanzel gave a report about the NFB of Missouri convention, giving special commendation for a workshop conducted for Independent Science by Ashley Neybert.

The Kansas School for the Blind advisory committee held a meeting on May 10. Superintendent John Harding provided an update regarding the various programs operated by the school and expressed grave concerns regarding assessments that were to be

provided to the students by the Kansas Department of Education. These assessments were poorly prepared, making it extremely difficult for students to complete them.

Paula Muetting, a member of our chapter who lives in Dodge City gave us an update regarding the perils that her son faced at the school for the blind. Emails from the school reveal a gross pattern of unprofessionalism by various officials at the school. Andrew is currently attending Brenn Prep School in Carbondale, Illinois. It appears that this school may be doing a better job in addressing the needs that Andrew has resulting from other disabilities.

A bill was introduced in the state senate which protects the rights of blind parents. S276 will continue to proceed through the legislature in 2022.

On April 20, 2021, Tom Anderson attended a meeting of the Johnson County Republican Party Elephant Club, listening to speeches given by State Senator Kelli Warren, Chairperson of the Judiciary Committee and Ron Ryckman, Speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives. Tom Anderson spoke briefly with these legislators upon completion of the meeting.

In June, our chapter gave \$1500 to our state affiliate to assist with funding Newsline in Kansas. Our chapter gave \$500 to the NFB for giving week. Our chapter gave \$50 each to the various funds, giving \$200 in total.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Dean Behrens on June 30. He had been a member of the chapter since the 1970's.

The chapter held an NFB convention party on July 10 at O'Neil's restaurant and pub. Fifteen people attended this party, and we were delighted to meet in person.

The walk-a-thon fund raiser has been rescheduled to October 2. We hope to raise much money with this fund raiser.

Tom Anderson has served on the SILCK (State Independent Living. Council of Kansas for six years. I was the SILCK representative to the State Rehabilitation Council. Terms of office are coming to an end with these organizations. New board members are needed for the State Rehabilitation Council. If you are interested in serving, please contact State President Tom Page at topage@swbell.net or (316) 734-4839.

Introduction To a Member

by Jody Mulik

Hello. I am Jody Mulik, current Secretary of the Johnson-Wyandotte County Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas.

When I was seven years old, I came down with a very high fever. Doctors performed a number of tests to determine the cause. Eventually, I was diagnosed with optic atrophy (a condition that affects the optic nerve, which carries impulses from the eye to the brain). At that point I was considered legally blind. To this day, there is no effective treatment for optic atrophy.

When I lost my sight, I was attending Blessed Sacrament School in Kansas City, Kansas. The nuns there had no idea how to teach a blind student, so I transferred to the Kansas State School for the Blind (KSSB) in Kansas City, Kansas as a day student. I was a student at the KSSB for four years. When I arrived there, I had fairly good sight. I could read large print, and I even learned how to play the piano. As my sight deteriorated, I needed to learn how

to read Braille. But the staff refused to teach me Braille because I had too much sight.

While at the KSSB, mainstreaming came into existence. So, I hoped to return to Blessed Sacrament School to complete my elementary education. However, that school required me to know Braille before it would accept me. My parents found a retired teacher from the KSSB who taught me Braille over a summer. I then re-enrolled at Blessed Sacrament School.

After graduating from Blessed Sacrament School, I attended Bishop Ward High School in Kansas City, Kansas. I graduated from there after four years. Then I attended Donnelly College in Kansas City, Kansas and received my associate's degree after two years.

I received Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) when I entered the workforce. As a result, my income was limited; so, I never held a full-time job. I worked at the Pizza Hut Call Center in Overland Park, Kansas as a delivery order taker for eight years.

When my mother came down with Alzheimer's disease, I became her caregiver. Therefore, I didn't have time for part-time work outside the home. My brother would drive from his home in Kansas City, Kansas and take me to the Alzheimer's Association office in Prairie Village, Kansas twice each month for support group meetings, and he would stay with Mom while I was at the meetings. It was at those meetings that I met Don Mulik whose wife had a form of dementia. Eventually, Mom required care at St. Luke's Hospice House in Kansas City, Missouri. I would go there and play her favorite songs on the piano to help brighten her days. After she died, I continued to go to St. Luke's once a week to play the piano for an hour for the residents and their families. Then I would stay for a bereavement support group meeting. (COVID-19 has eliminated my activities at the hospice house, but I do

participate in conference calls with the bereavement support group.)

Don's wife died in early 2017, and we started dating later that year. As we learned more about each other, we discovered that both of us had attended Blessed Sacrament School and Church. In fact, we knew many of the same people from church. We got married at Queen of the Holy Rosary Church in Overland Park, Kansas on October 19, 2018.

There is a group at Queen of the Holy Rosary Church called "iCare" (inclusive Catholic Activities and Religious Experiences) where Don and I volunteer as instructors for mentally challenged children and adults. We also Braille the readings used by other blind people at the iCare Masses.

In closing, I am glad that I joined the Johnson-Wyandotte County Chapter of the NFB of Kansas to help other blind people live the life they want.

Seniors Division Update

By Dianne Hemphill

The NFBKS, Senior's Division has been busy again this past six months with meaningful presentations and volunteer work. Continuing with our monthly virtual meetings has been filled with great presentations and a good deal of focus on health and wellness with some updates on technology added in. Our fourth Tuesday, monthly call-in meetings focused on the following topics with experts in the field:

- Matt Volbrecht - an expert and business man, on technology for the blind provides both individual training and expert advice on technology selection;
- Non 24 - what is it and why do some blind individuals benefit from special medications to resolve the sleeping disorder
- Susan Day, blind PT from Ohio thoroughly covering foot care, home safety and balance exercises;
- A 20-minute gentle, seated YOGA class using a free program offered on YOU TUBE from Eyes Free Fitness;
- Peg Halverson - talking about her experience with the Envision glasses and the Louie voice control
- Lynn Baillif - blind dietician, presents the benefits of a healthy diet and how to use the DASH diet

The NFB of Missouri Senior's Division invited the NFB of Kansas to call into a weekly nutritional training session with Lynn Balif. These weekly nutritional training sessions focused on a different health/nutrition topic each week.

The NFBK Senior's Division hosted a fun filled BINGO game prior to our monthly call-in meetings...I'm just saying, some people are luckier than others! thanks again to Don Mulic, a great BINGO caller.

During the month of July, there was no Senior's Division meeting as the virtual national convention kept us all busy during the week-long convention meetings. Dianne Hemphill did a presentation during the Braille meetings on her approach to teaching beginner Braille seniors within a virtual teaching arena. Dianne and Tom Anderson, both Senior Division of Kansas officers, have continued offering volunteer Braille lessons since last fall's virtual NFB Senior's Training opportunity via zoom or telephone calls.

The upcoming 2nd virtual Senior's Training Workshop takes place, via Zoom, September 19-25th. This very useful workshop encourages those senior's, NFB members or not, to enroll and take advantage of the invaluable daily living training options. The fee is \$50. If you desire more information or assistance in covering the training fee, please contact Dianne Hemphill at diannehemphill@cox.net.

We look forward to joining with our senior's division focusing on "living the life you want."

Jayhawk chapter update

By Rob Tabor

The Jayhawk chapter of NFB continues to perk along as we continue to cope with the ongoing and seemingly never ending Covid virus pandemic. Most of our meetings until our regular August meeting have been convened remotely via our state affiliate teleconferencing service. After giving our membership a summer vacation we we're ready to get back to work doing the business of the Federation and we convened our monthly business meeting at Perkins restaurant and bakery in Lawrence. Our normal meeting location at Conroy's Irish Pub has not been available to us due to a staffing shortage on Mondays. now that the staff shortage has apparently been resolved, we are hoping to return to Conroy's for our regular meeting on September 20th, at which time we will prepare for our annual election of officers as well as our Meet the Blind month activities to take place during October.

On May 10th, I announced to the chapter that I will not seek another term as chapter president, a position which I have humbly

held since 2014. We will conduct our election of officers at our annual meeting in October and we look forward to an exciting new period of leadership in the Jayhawk chapter.

For more information about the meeting and activities of the Jayhawk chapter the NFB you may contact Rob Tabor by phone at (785) 865-9959 or by email at rob.tabor@sbcglobal.net.

NFB Of Kansas in Communities of Faith Update

By Tom Anderson

We started the year in February, with Linda Anderson sharing her testimony about how she came to know Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior. She came to know Jesus while visiting her grandmother in Arcadia, Kansas when she was 11 years old. She spoke about when she met her future husband at the 1975 Convention of the NFB. She also shared about how her faith helped her to overcome challenges in her life. In March, Rehnee Aikens Vice President of the NFB In Communities of Faith spoke with us about the Kingdom of God and how God was using her to minister to others in Houston, Texas.

We were delighted to hear from Cornessa Cherry in April from Jacksonville, Florida. She shared her testimony about her faith in Jesus and also shared with us her strong work ethic which was instilled in her by her mother. In May, Valerie Gibson, a graduate of the Colorado Center for the Blind spoke with us about her growing up in Tennessee and how she came to know Jesus Christ. Valerie is planning to work as a teacher in Namibia at the school for the blind as part of a two-year stint with the Peace Corps.

For our June meeting, Julie McCullough from Topeka, Kansas shared her story about her faith in Jesus Christ. In July, we had a

prayer meeting, praying for the NFB and for our nation. Lastly, in August, we spoke about our reactions to the NFB convention. And we had a Bible study.

We pray for the needs of those on the call and for members of our affiliate.

North-Central Chapter Update

By Sharon Luka and Donna Wood

The North-Central chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas (NFBKS) meets the fourth Wednesday of the month at 3:00 PM. Chapter President is Margaret Finger. North-Central returned to in person meetings, at the McKinsy Center in May 2021. Members and visitors are welcome to participate in person or by conference call.

Chapter members have been as active as they can be with the restrictions of Covid 19. Members Sharon Luka and Shauna Zepeda participated in the Washington seminar. Where they presented proposed bills to Kansas Senators and Congressional Representatives through the virtual platform of Zoom. The chapter members are in hopes of having a bike-a-thon fund raiser in the fall. In July the members held an in-person banquet at Martinelli's restaurant for National Convention. In July Sharon Luka also signed up to test the E-Reader through The National Library Service. Austin Meyer keeps the chapter members informed of the IOS updates to their iPhones.

Coming up in the future Sharon Luka plans to be part of the virtual Seniors Retreat September 19-25, 2021. For the "Meet the Blind

Month” the members plan on participating in the virtual White Cane Day. Seven of the members are planning to attend in person the State Convention held November 12-14, in Overland Park.

If you live in the North-Central area and would like to be a part of the chapter please contact Margaret Finger at dinoc1@gmail.com or (949) 701-9458. Come and join in the chapter it is a great group of people!

Introduction to a Member

By Margaret Finger

My life is very busy and fulfilling in addition to spending four days a week providing therapeutic and Swedish massages.

Due to my decreased vision, I have been aware of an organization called the National Federation of the Blind (NFB). Founded in 1940, NFB is the oldest organization for the blind and led by the blind. They provide resources and training as well as lobbying at State and Federal Legislatures with the goal of allowing all blind people to lead “the lives they want”. I moved to Kansas in 2015 and was invited to attend my first State Convention in 2018 and became a member. Because there were not enough members here in Salina, I joined a chapter at large. By 2019 our memberships increased to enable us to form the North Central Kansas Chapter, and I became the Treasurer. I am now the President and have been to two national Conventions.

I have been appointed to three Boards that have to do with the disabled: the State Board of NFB, the Accessibility Advisory Board for the City of Salina, and most recently the Governor’s Board for the Statewide Independent Living Council for Kansas. It

is an honor and privilege to be considered for these positions, much less chosen to serve.

But it's not all work and service, and as any good health care practitioner knows, there is much more to Life. I also work out at the gym twice a week, do Yoga once a week, and take two-mile walks through our neighborhood when the temperature outside is above fifty and below ninety degrees!

In the Spring of this year, I took up the Alto Saxophone and found a wonderful lady who plays in the Praise band at our Church to give me lessons. I practice several times a week and one day, I will be famous!

I read a lot both on my iPhone and Talking Books reader. It's amazing the apps there are to make reading accessible.

I crochet and macrame and my work is all over our house and in the homes of many of our friends and family.

I attend Church regularly and we are blessed to be there.

South-Central Chapter Update

By Donna Wood

As everyone else in NFB of Kansas the South-Central Chapter has also been meeting by zoom or conference call for the last year and a half. Our meetings occur the second Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM. Emily Schlenker serves as President; Roshunda Holt Vice-President; Mikka Pyykhala Secretary; and Tom Page Treasurer. The South-Central Chapter holds their elections for new officers in January.

In February Tom Page, Nicole Taylor, Donna Wood and Emily Schlenker participated in the Washington Seminar. Due to covid we were unable to travel to Washington D. C. to meet with our legislators in person. We scheduled Zoom meetings with them. Four topics concerning the blind were presented by different members of the Kansas affiliate.

In March Mayor Whipple of Wichita joined us for our business meeting. We held discussions on accessibility issues in Wichita's transportation, Website, Apps and areas under construction. Mayor Whipple stated that because of the extra funds for Covid the city may have money to address some of our access issues in the future.

In July the South-Central Chapter convened at the Olive Tree for the National Convention banquet. We had 16 members present for the banquet and speech by President Mark Riccobono. A good meal and a good time was had by all. It was the first time we had seen each other in more than a year. We did miss our affiliate President Tom Page. He was unable to join us. He was recovering from knee surgery.

In August some of the chapter members met in person at the El Mexico café. The topic discussed at this meeting was where to hold our in-person meetings in the future. Since we will no longer be able to use the previous meeting location. So stayed tuned with us to see where we will meet.

For inquiries into our Chapter meetings, socials and fund raisers watch for announcements on home-on-the-range or contact Emily Schlenker at (316) 644-4227 or eschlenker@cox.net. In the meantime, go out and "LIVE THE LIFE YOU WANT".

NFB of KS State Convention
November 12-14, 2021

Please send registration form and payment to Robert Fuller using PayPal at treasurer@nfbks.org or mail to **1120 Randall Rd Lawrence, KS 66049**. Please make checks payable to the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas. If you are registering multiple attendees, please include all names of those you are registering. Please include the total number of registrations and meals.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/state/zip code _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Will you be attending virtually?

Pre-registration: [] x \$5.00

Registration at the door: [] x \$10.00

Luncheon: [] x \$15.00

Banquet: [] x \$30.00

\$.00 total

Please note if you would prefer a vegetarian meal:

Holiday Inn Overland Park West

8787 Reeder Rd Overland Park, KS 66214

(913) 888-8440

Room Rates: \$109 for singles or doubles per night.

Make sure to inform the hotel that you are with the NFB of KS group!

Please come and join us in celebrating living the lives we want!