

**TAP TRACKS**

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

**Spring / Summer 2021**

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From the President

by Tom Page

Greetings Kansas Federationists,

I barely know where to begin. So much has happened since our last mailing! Our first ever virtual convention was held in November of 2020. We heard from blind people and from representatives of agencies that serve the blind on a variety of topics. Some highlights include: hearing from Mike Burgess of Disability Rights Center of Kansas and our own Lou Ann Blake on early and absentee balloting issues that blind Kansans faced during the 2020 elections. Presentations from blind parents who have dealt with discrimination, and the report from Dan Decker of Kansas Rehabilitation Services detailing policy changes enacted as a result of our advocacy. We were treated to a great banquet by Gary Wunder (editor of the Braille Monitor).

Since then, we have been hard at work putting the agenda we set in November into action. In December we launched a new Code of Conduct Committee. Emily Schlenker, (South Central Chapter President) has led the effort. This group that she has brought together has met to discuss issues related to our code of conduct and how to bring awareness of it to our members. The committee has joined with our chapters to achieve this as well as illuminating how a person who has a grievance can go about filing a code of conduct complaint.

As swiftly as the new year was upon us, we began working on our first virtual Washington Seminar. Rob Tabor (1st vice President) led our seminar activities. His informational meeting and work arranging the congressional appointments was great and overall, I think we did a good job representing blind Kansans.

We were successful in getting our parent’s rights bill introduced into the Kansas Senate. It does not appear at this time that the bill will be passed out of committee but we are committed to re-introducing the bill in the 2022 session if required.

In addition, we have continued our work in our chapters across the state and have continued our advocacy for: youth, adults, and seniors. We continue to work to have our voice heard on relevant state committees and are seeking appointments to committees that we believe could benefit from the voice of the organized blind.

Sadly, the pandemic is again preventing us from meeting in person for our national convention. The good news is that there will be a great virtual convention which will offer opportunities for those who cannot travel to a national convention to participate. I know that planning is underway for banquet get togethers thrown by the chapters. I encourage you to register as soon as possible by visiting our national web site:

[https://nfb.org/civicrm/event/register?id=432&q=civicrm%2Fevent%2Fregister&reset=1](https://nfb.org/civicrm/event/register?id=432&q=civicrm%252Fevent%252Fregister&reset=1)

Before the summer is over, we will promote our college scholarship program, our virtual braille program for children (BELL academy at home edition) and begin planning our 2021 state convention. We hope to meet in person in Overland Park in November. Check our web site for more information.

<http://www.nfbks.org>

There has been so much activity in our work in Kansas I feel I am barely doing an adequate job of summarization. I think the best thing I can do is to recommend that you join us at a chapter or division meeting or at one of our regular board meetings to stay abreast of the happenings. The

best way to keep up with the meeting schedule is to subscribe to our email list. This can be done at <http://www.nfbnet.org> the name of our list is home-on-the-range.

2021 Washington Seminar Highlights

By Rob Tabor

Another NFB Washington Seminar is now in the annals of Federation history. This year’s event is historic for two reasons. First, it is the 49th annual Washington Seminar, formerly called the NFB March On Washington. But more importantly, the 2021 Washington Seminar was held exclusively via the Zoom cloud-based video conferencing platform, made necessary by the decision by House and Senate leadership to refrain from holding in-office meetings due to the pandemic. While we would have preferred to meet face to face with the members of the Kansas Congressional delegation, we gained the advantage of enabling about 10 to 15 members to participate. Fortunately, we were able to meet with legislative aides from all six (6) Congress members and were also joined by Representative Sharice Davids, (d-KS3), and Ron Estes (R-KS4.) WE are especially appreciative of Katherine Thomas of the office of Representative Tracey Mann (R-KS1.) Katherine actively dialogued with us and asked several highly astute questions.

As most of our Kansas readers know, four (4) issues were chosen by our advocacy and policy staff at the NFB National Center in Baltimore. These were the Access Technology Affordability Act (ATAA) which provides for a $2000 refundable tax credit available to all eligible blind individuals to be used over a three (3) year period. The House measure was introduced as HR431 and the companion bill in the Senate is S212. Both bills have bipartisan co-sponsorship and include a five (5) year sunset clause, after which we hope to make improvements after this first trial period.

The second proposed measure is a bill that authorizes and directs the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to issue regulatory standards to make home use medical devices accessible to blind consumers, and does so over a three (3) year phase-in basis. Another proposal directs the US Department of Justice (DOJ) to implement accessibility standards for mobile apps and websites. Last but definitely not least, we call on Congress to pass a package of provisions to enable blind Americans to register and vote independently and secretly both at in person polling stations and remotely via electronic ballot delivery and return systems which have proven to be successful in five (5) states without any reports of data breaches or election tampering.

Our strategy was to have each chapter take the lead in presenting our 2021 legislative priorities before the House member who represents the membership of each of our four local chapters. In the Senate we selected presenters from a cross-section of the state.

The two key moments of our presentations took place when Randy Phifer demonstrated his blue tooth glucometer which speaks through the Voiceover screen reader on his iPhone, and when Donna Wood held up her refreshable braille device as an example of working access technology. Staff and Congress members alike were impressed by the access technology show and tell.

As for the end result, we were unable to secure any commitments for co-sponsorship, but we are very optimistic that with regular and persistent follow-up dialogue with the Kansas Congressional delegation will pay big dividends.

Baking Bread Beyond

By Sharon Luka

It was around 1973 or so. I might have been working the evening switchboard at the Kansas State School for the Blind. A visiting gentleman introduced himself to me and invited me to a Johnson County chapter meeting of the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas.

There I met many magnificent memorable blind people who encouraged me in high school, college, and beyond.

There was much positive can-do philosophy that made me long to learn alternative cooking methods, cane travel, and ideas which allowed me to blossom in many areas of interest.

Thus, I have been blessed to bake many loaves of pumpkin bread, knit afghans, swim many miles, perform and teach music.

Many thanks to the National Federation of the Blind for its confidence boosting activities, educational seminars, and great conventions!

[ed. a note from Donna…

Sharon Luka has been a long-time member of the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas. She has been a member since the early 70’s. Over the years she has filled many positions in local chapters. In November of 2008 Sharon was elected to the NFBKS board of directors as secretary. For eleven years she faithfully and skillfully executed the duties of her position. Sharon kept us on our toes and entertained by doing such things as having the membership chant “motion carried” after reading the election results from the business meeting minutes at state conventions. November of 2020 Sharon stepped down as secretary of the board. Sharon plans to continue working in the NFBKS, she will turn her skills and energy in new directions. Please join me in Thanking! Sharon for all of her hard work in the last eleven years as our state secretary.

News from the North Central Chapter, 2020

By Margaret Finger

The North-Central chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas Meeting time and location, Previously at the MacKenzie Center, Salina Public Library

Currently the fourth Wednesday of the month at 3:00 pm by telephone conference. The conference call number is (916) 235-1420, participants pin is 879925pound key. Current Officers are President: Dr. Margaret Finger, Vice president: Anna Hindman, Secretary: Sharon Luka, Treasurer: Tom Basgall. Members are Michael Coone, Ruth Hindman, Austin Meyer and Shauna Zepeda.

Funding and Advocacy Efforts

We were registered to participate in “Discover Salina Naturally” in May of last year. This is a yearly Festival held at Lakewood Park that attracts hundreds of people at an all-day event. Participants include the Kansas Wesleyan University Astronomy Club, a Kite Maker who performs stunts on his handmade kites, Local Farmers, live music, and several food trucks.

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 this was cancelled.

While the National Convention in Houston, Texas was cancelled in July for in-person attendance, three of our North-Central Kansas Chapter members, Sharon, Shauna, and Austin, attended virtually.

I am a part of the City of Salina Accessibility Advisory Board and we spent this Fall in special sessions developing a survey for the residents of Salina. This will allow those with disabilities and accessibility issues to have a voice in City Planning and Housing. Also, a resource list was compiled for persons with disabilities and NFB is included in this list.

In November we attended the State Convention virtually via Zoom. Our chapter celebrated the banquet portion of the State Convention at Martinelli’s Italian Restaurant in Downtown Salina.

Two of our members, Sharon and Shauna, played a major role in the Washington Seminar in February of this year. They attended virtually and attended several meetings with Legislators.

The Smokey Hill River Music Festival has announced it will be live during the Labor Day weekend. In past years we have been involved in this as a chapter, enjoying the three-mile walk. It is hoped that in the Fall it will be less restricted.

A welcome to our newest member Tom Basgall. He was born in Kansas and he was one of a set of twins. He will tell you that he is the more handsome of the pair. If you do not believe it, just ask him. He worked for Vocational Rehab for 22 years. I am sure that in that time he helped a lot of people. He enjoys bowling, watching football and dancing.

Together: Truth, Growth, Refreshment

By Sharon Luka

At our State convention in Salina November, 2019, membership coins were presented at the banquet on November second.

Together let's ponder the coin's Inscriptions.

The top of the coin houses the block print coin of the word "member."

But for the moment, bless your fingers with the coin's bountiful braille.

Below the print we read the letters T G R.

In braille, the grade two contraction equivalent for these conjoined letters is the word

"Together!"

Muse with me on the tactile "shape" of this symbolic term.

Notice the tall tenor of the letter T.

Now glide over the full width of the letter G.

Finally, feel the fabulous tall stretch of the letter R.

The letter G rests in the center of the braille inscription, spelling the gregarious growth of the National Federation of the Blind.

As you hold your membership coin,

Feel how the letters conjoin.

Be refreshed by its

braille

Its truth will not fail;

For its message will always prevail.

T is the truth

teamed with tenacity

to bend what it means to be blind.

G is for growth

and the positive oath

To leave misconceptions behind.

R is refreshment for running the race

of the National Federation of the Blind.

As you hold your membership coin,

Feel how the letters conjoin.

Be refreshed by its

braille

Its truth will not fail;

For its message will onward sail.

What’s Happening in our Senior’s Division

By Dianne Hemphill

The NFBK Senior’s Division continues to foster opportunities, ideas for adjustment and provide personal stories of insights and courage. The call-in monthly meetings take place the fourth Tuesday at 7 P.M. During this unusually stressful year of 2020, the senior’s found a special connection for support and camaraderie. With the social isolation of the pandemic, it has been especially important to focus on positive and useful information. Thus, the kick off subject covered all Covid-19 details that were known at the time and encouraging the lifestyle approaches we now take for our day to day safety. The division focused on a 2-part series about Social Security as it impacts seniors.

The NFBK had a very innovative approach for the October Meet the Blind Month with a spotlight on blind Kansan’s in the NFBK affiliate. The personal short stories and pictures can be found on the nfbks.org web site. Several of our seniors are featured.

The newly developed out of state training opportunity which had taken place just a couple of times at Rocky Bottom, North Carolina, was changed to a virtual training option. This turned out to be a very successful training approach during the pandemic. Kansas had 10 percent of the participants - WOW! this really worked for our seniors! Both Tom Anderson and Dianne Hemphill, were teaching volunteers for the training. Starting adults interested in learning a very basic beginning work in Braille has continued since that kick-off week. Two of the senior students, from other states, presented their adjustment stories at a monthly meeting call. They both found Braille much more user friendly than they ever expected and have begun to believe more and more in their capabilities.

This has been a tough year for everyone but the support and friendship found in the NFBK Senior’s Division has made it a bit more positive. We are always looking for meaningful topics and speakers.

The very caring officers, include: Dianne Hemphill, president; Susie Stanzel, Vice-President; Tom Anderson, Secretary; and Rob Tabor, Treasurer.

Wishful Thinking

By Pila Mahoney

Today, dear Lord, I am 90 years old and there is much I haven't done,

So, would you let me live some more ... until I am 91?

But then if I have not finished all the things I want to do,

would you let me stay awhile, say ... until I am 92?

So many places I would like to go so much,

much more to see, would you manage then, o Lord, to make me 93?

The world is changing so very fast,

much remains in store and I know you would understand why I would like to make it 94!

And, if at 94, you would grant I am still alive,

would you be very nice indeed, should I remain till 95!

You know, dear Lord, my many errors, things I need to fix ...

So, to make amends, I would dearly love to stick to 96!

I know how much it means to ask.

How great it is in heaven, but your earth is sweet and one more year would give me 97!

I know by then that I will be old and slow and late,

even so, it would mean a lot to be around at 98!

I hope by then to understand, and have given you more time,

So, if would open up your door I will leave at 99!

NFB of Kansas Communities of Faith

By Tom Anderson

Our Division has had a variety of speakers during the year 2020.

In February, Peggy Chong, from Colorado, known as the Blind History lady spoke about blind people who demonstrated their faith in this country in the past.

In March we heard from Ed Poindexter, a man who was striving to become a deacon in the Roman Catholic Church. It takes at least three years of study to achieve this objective. Unfortunately, for Ed, he began to lose his vision when he was nearing the end of his training. Ed is now learning the skills and techniques of blindness which will help him to continue to be successful in his life. He is becoming familiar with the positive philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind. He participated in the NFB Seniors Division training at Rocky Bottom, South Carolina in 2018.

In April, we had a discussion regarding the challenges we are facing in dealing with COVID 19. Many people from throughout the country participated in this call.

In June, we were delighted to hear from Joe Goode, a Technology specialist from the Iowa Department for the blind and Shiranda Goode a rehabilitation counselor for the Iowa Department for the Blind. They both spoke about how they became Christians. Joe is a graduate of the Colorado Center for the Blind.

In July, we prayed for the nation and discussed the upcoming NFB In Communities of faith national meeting which took place on July 16, 2020 via Zoom.

In August, we discussed the national convention and the national division meeting.

In September we heard from Tyrone Bullock, Associate Pastor of Clearview Baptist church in Woodlawn, Maryland. An independent Baptist pastor, Mr. Bullock recently lost his vision.

In October, we had a Bible study about the willingness of God to respond to the needs of believers. The text for this study was Psalm 18.

In November, we heard from Holly McKnight, President of the Arlington chapter of the NFB Of Texas. She spoke about her faith and how she received healings through medical means.

In December, we heard from Luke Siebert from Ardmore, Alabama. Luke is an active Federationist and a seminary student online from Midwest Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City Missouri. Luke miraculously survived a car accident which caused his Blindness. Luke works with the BELL program in Alabama.

In January, 2021, we heard from Bob Santo, a graduate of the Colorado Center for the Blind. Bob told us about his faith in Christ and how he overcame struggles with alcoholism.

Linda Anderson will speak at our February 2021 meeting. We generally use our conference number when holding these meetings. We have used Zoom on a few occasions. The conference number is (916) 2351420 and the access code is 879925 followed by pound. The security code is 25463 followed by pound. The officers of The in Communities of Faith Division are: Tom Anderson, President; Cheryl Miller, Vice-President; Donna Wood, Secretary/Treasurer.

Jayhawk Chapter Report

By Rob Tabor

The Jayhawk chapter endeavors to maintain a robust level of member engagement under the challenges of the Coronavirus pandemic. Since the spring of 2020 we have held a combination of monthly meetings, some exclusively via teleconference and some being hybrid from Conroy’s Pub in Lawrence combined with our state affiliate teleconferencing system to accommodate members who choose not to take risks with the virus. We hope to return to on site meetings on a monthly basis, although we anticipate that hybrid meetings will continue now that we have realized the benefits of enabling others in the Federation family to join in. We usually meet on the second Monday of the month at 4:00 pm, with an occasional exception as we did in February on enable us to connect via Zoom with the Great Gathering In ceremony, the traditional kick-off for the Washington Seminar.

The Jayhawk chapter has a membership of ten (10), down from 12 in the previous year due to the untimely death of both Pat Slick and Tamara Kearney. Tamara, who had served as our chapter’s membership engagement coordinator, is succeeded by Cheryl Miller. Additionally, Renee Morgan has graciously accepted an appointment as our social events coordinator. She looks forward to being active in this new role once we are all vaccinated and can put the pandemic behind us.

We held our annual election of officers at our October 2020 meeting. Rob Tabor, Renee Morgan, and Brendy Latare were re-elected as president, vice president, and treasurer, respectively. Susan Tabor was elected as our new secretary.

In mid-January I received a telephone call from Dustin Disque who informed me he has moved to Arnold Pennsylvania, approximately an hour’s drive from Pittsburgh. Dustin said he has met a woman in the area and feels the relationship holds a great promise. We wish Dustin the very best as he begins a new chapter of his life.

Now for our chapter member feature. In this issue we feature our first vice president, Michelle Renee Morgan, known to us simply as Renee. She hails from Lake Charles, Louisiana. She eventually moved to Kansas where she lived in various localities. In her early twenties she took a trip to Europe where she lived for about a year, first in Paris, then Amsterdam. Renee eked out a living cleaning houses and sometimes playing bass guitar with a band for tips.

In 2003 Renee moved to Lawrence where she worked again waiting tables and doing odd jobs for about a year, after which she enrolled at the University of Kansas where she obtained a bachelor of arts degree with a major in theatre. A few years later Renee met and eventually married Charles Hurst, also a member of the Jayhawk chapter. In 2013 Renee and Charles formed a band called Volition featuring Renee on bass guitar and as band manager and Charles on lead guitar. Other band members included an acoustic rhythm guitar and mandolin player, a keyboardist, and a lead female vocalist. Unfortunately, the band’s life was cut short when Charles suffered a major stroke.

Renee now works full time for the Willow Domestic Violence Center, where she helps victims of Domestic violence and human trafficking to locate permanent housing and other community supports.

For information about the membership and activities of the Jayhawk chapter you may write to Rob Tabor at rob.tabor@sbcglobal.net or call 785-865-9959.

Johnson-Wyandotte County Report for 2020

By Susan L. Stanzel

Tom Anderson is again the Kansas Coordinator for our annual BELL Academy. He went to Baltimore for training the second week of January 2020.

In February 2020 five of our members went to Washington D.C. to visit our Kansas elected delegation. They were Don and Jodi Mulik, Tom and Linda Anderson, and Ashley Neybert. The chapter provided $200 for each couple and $150 for Ashley to help cover the expenses.

We commonly raise quite a bit of money through our participation in the Independence walk with the Kansas City, Missouri chapter. We are spending it wisely. We are the first chapter in Kansas to give to our preauthorized contribution program known as the PAC plan. We began donating at our national convention and decided to raise our contribution to $15 per month at the January meeting. As most of you know, our beloved Dick Edlund was the National Treasurer as well as our State President. He always said a dollar spent on the local level was like spending $10 on the state level and $100 on the national level. He taught all of us well. I decided after talking to Pattie Chang at the National convention that I would join the Dream Maker’s Circle. I challenge each of our chapters to join the PAC plan and each of you personally to come into the circle with me. As she said, none of us have any idea what will be left. We will get money from some circle members and know that others had good intentions, but life got in the way.

On February 14th, 2020 Tom Anderson and I again participated in the regional Braille Challenge at the Kansas School for the Blind.

Other news from the chapter is Pila Mahoney turned 90 on February 15th. Martha’s friend Revelle Lee passed away in late November. Martha is doing well.

March 13th was the last in person meeting held by our chapter. Don Mulik got information on his phone announcing the cancelling of all in person federation activities while the majority of our members were dining at Olive Garden. Naturally, we were already together and proceeded to the church. Little did we all know how long this was going to last. We therefore began our telephone meetings in April. Virtual is not all bad. We have had guests from other parts of the state.

As all of you know, we attended our National convention virtually. If memory serves the attendees were Ashley Neybert, the Muliks, Tom Anderson and Susie Stanzel.

Our state convention was also held virtually. We had planned for it to be in Johnson county, but hopefully that will happen this year. We will be the host chapter. Again, if memory serves, the attendees were Tom Anderson, the Muliks, Ashley Neybert, Martha Kelly, Randy Phifer, Cornessa Cherry, Pila Mahoney, and Susie Stanzel. Apologies if I have missed Anyone.

We rewrote our constitution with the able assistance of Rob Tabor. The new name of our chapter is the Johnson-Wyandotte County Chapter.

Note from Susie

I have truly enjoyed being the President of this fantastic chapter. At this point in my life, I am with my grandchildren during some of five out of seven days in the week. My Mother-in-law was of tremendous assistance to Dean and myself. I want to do the same for Crystal and Michael. No one ever expected this pandemic to last this long. I never expected to go to their house each weekend for this long. I started babysitting when my daughter Loretta was here. We thought it would just last a few weeks. My family is where my focus needs to be. The chapter is in GREAT hands.

A Note from Donna

Susan L. Stanzel has been a member of the National Federation of The Blind of Kansas since 1971. Susie was not a founding member, but she joined a few years after the Kansas affiliate was formed. She was early enough that she knew the founders, personally. Over the years Susie has held just about every position in a chapter and on the board of directors. Her most notables are her positions as Johnson County chapter president and the President of the affiliate. Susie is one of those that came before us that allows us to stand on her shoulders so that we may achieve our goals. She sold nuts to raise money for scholarships, she “Marched on Washington” year after year, she sat on committees and boards for more hours than she can calculate and she has heard more times than she can count that she can’t do that because she is blind. None of this has stopped her. She keeps fighting and she keeps working and she keeps building the NFB. Thank You Susie for all that you have done and all that you will do. We are all the better for being a part of the NFBKS that you helped build.

Addendum: Johnson/ Wyandotte Chapter Meeting

By Tom Anderson

On December 11, 2020, the chapter held elections and the following officers were elected. Tom Anderson, President; Randy J. Phifer, Vice-President; Jody Mulik, Secretary; and Don Mulik, Treasurer.

At our January meeting we discussed goals for the upcoming year. We listened and had some discussion regarding Presidential release 501. In our February meeting we will discuss the Washington seminar and will hear from the state Code of Conduct Committee. In March, we will hear from Craig Cooper, life skills instructor at the New Mexico School for the Blind. He will conduct a philosophy discussion regarding unpacking the one-minute message of the NFB.

It is likely that some of our chapter members will participate in the virtual convention of the NFB Of Missouri which will take place from March 26-28. The national representative for this convention will be Anil Lewis Director of Educational programs for the NFB. =

New Member for Johnson-Wyandotte County Chapter

By Susan L. Stanzel

Fabian Siffrin’ joined our chapter last May. He is a student at Johnson County Community College. Through his efforts AIRA is free on the campus. He can now be sure exactly where he is and get exactly what he wants from the vending machines. He is very active with technology. He sent me the following:

I enjoy helping people with their technology. I started learning about computers at a very young age. I have helped sighted people and blind people with their devices such as Apple devices, Braille Note Touch or Braille Note Touch Plus, Braille Note Apex and more. The first link I will be providing is my YouTube channel. On my channel I do piano tutorials, technology demonstrations, security system tests and troubleshooting tips, and game/apps demonstrations for Mac, Apple and Windows.

youtube.com/c/TheTechPianoPlayerKid10

The next link is my podcast. My podcast consists of technology demonstrations and games accessible for the blind on Mac, iPhone, and Windows. You can find the podcast on GoogleCast, Apple Podcast, and other podcast platforms. You can also email questions of my podcast by emailing: bltechtalk@gmail.com

The name of my podcast is: The Blind Tech Talk

It is under the name Fabien Siffrin

Next, I will be providing a link to a video of me demonstrating Aira. Aira is a service for the blind that allows blind people to call a real live agent to get assistance with a daily task like cooking instructions, navigating on the computer when the site is inaccessible and more. The link is below.

https://youtube.com/watch"v=ZxbsgRuaE5I

The last link I will provide is an article of me talking about accessibility at my school. The link is below.

https://www.kansascity.com/news/local/community/joco-913/article237715259.html

State Independent Living Centers of Kansas Update for 2020

By Tom Anderson

I am the Vice-Chair of the State Independent Living Centers of Kansas (SILCK). I chaired the SILCK meeting on February 6, 2020. Our Chairman, Matt Enyart has the disease known as ALS and was unable to attend. SILCK is in the midst of working on the state Plan for Independent living. The SILCK had a successful audit. Board members asked many questions regarding the work of the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services. It has been recommended that the aforementioned agency and Kansas Rehabilitation Services will be a part of Adult Services in the proposed Department of Human Services.

I went to San Diego to attend the national meeting of the state independent living centers. These meetings are very instructive regarding the work of the independent living movement.

As of August 2020, Bryan Ellefson is now the new chairman of SILCK. I will remain as Vice-Chair through 2021.

Greetings from the South-Central Chapter

By Emily Schlenker

The South-Central chapter had its share of changes and challenges in the past year.

One of the first things we were faced with was switching to virtual meetings after January, which was the last month we met at Envision on North Main Street. We have greatly appreciated the use of their facilities.

When it was time for National Convention, many of us were able to tune in to the virtual stream, and this allowed more of us to attend. Some of us also gathered on July 18th for a socially distanced dinner and streamed the banquet speech from a private room at the Larkspur restaurant in downtown Wichita.

We also gathered virtually for the state convention on November 4th. It was good to hear everyone's voices! Highlights included personal stories from blind parents and greetings from Dan Decker, the new director of vocational rehabilitation services for the state of Kansas.

On February 4th, the South-Central Chapter hosted an informational presentation open to the affiliate on Covid19 and the available vaccinations for this virus by Dr. Leslie Page DO MPH, who is a retired physician.

This year, Washington Seminar was held virtually on Zoom, and many from Kansas were able to participate and interact with their representatives. Members of our chapter spoke with representative, Ron Estes, and staff members from senators Roger Marshal and Jerry Moran. This year, the Federation focused on legislation in the areas of accessible voting Maintenance of accessibility regarding websites and apps, and inclusion of nonvisual accessibility in the manufacture of medical devices.

Our chapter would like to profile Alison Roets, who has been a member for several years. Alison has done a wonderful job updating and administering the NFB of Kansas Facebook page, posting events on the home-on-the-range mailing list, and is working closely with Sharon Luca in order to take over as secretary of the state affiliate. She makes our chapter so proud!

We are sad to announce the passing of Christi Wells (mother of chapter member Caleb Wells) and Marrin Johnson (chapter member) at the end of 2020. Our hearts go out to their families. [Since Emily’s writing, we also mourn the loss of Billie Nickell, mother of member and former chapter president, Serena Nickell and her brother Heath.]

As of January 2021, the South-Central chapter meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 6 PM on either the conference line or Zoom depending on the situation.

Here’s to another year!

Live the Life You Want!