

Fall 2010

Ohio Connection

American Council of the Blind Ohio
P.O. Box 307128 Gahanna, OH 43230

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Building Blocks for a Brighter Future

— *By Mary Hiland*

Are you a parent of a child who is blind or visually impaired? Do you know how to work with school administrators so your child receives the services he or she is entitled to? Are you comfortable with the "alphabet soup" of special education such as LRE, FAPE, LEA, IEE, MFE and IDEA? Do you know what kind of technology is best for your child or when to start orientation and mobility exercises for your toddler or preschooler?

We have the answers to these questions and more. ACB Ohio and the Ohio Lions Foundation invite you to join us for the fourth annual **Building Blocks for a Brighter Future** — a full day of workshops and activities for families with children who are blind or visually impaired at the Ohio State School for the Blind in Columbus on September 25, 2010. **Sign-in and exhibits open at 9:15 a.m. The program begins at 10 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m.**

The goals of this seminar are to give parents tools to work with; to encourage children to explore creative outlets through various activities; provide

round-table discussion groups for parents and/or grandparents; and for families and siblings to network with one another.

Our keynote speaker will be a high school student who has successfully navigated the special education process. There will be panel discussions, resource materials, and hands-on technology demonstrations. Children will enjoy a day of games and activities, while parents share and learn. A pizza lunch will be provided.

The fee is just \$10 per family, which includes lunch, a full day of learning and sharing, and a gift from the National Braille Press worth \$10 for each visually impaired child. Pre-register by September 20. For questions or concerns, call Mary Hiland at (800) 835-2226 or e-mail mary.hiland@sbcglobal.net.

The program will be similar to last year's event, but we have made improvements based on feedback from last year's participants, so we encourage families to join us again.

From the President's Desk — By Linda Wyman

As I write this column, Congress is in recess, but what an encouraging legislative success we have to celebrate! The American Council of the Blind, along with a coalition of organizations, has long advocated for The Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act. This summer HR 3101 passed through the House of Representatives, and on August 5, the Senate passed S 3304 unanimously.

Accessible user interfaces allowing for interaction with the Internet and a path for more video-described content across the country have greatly enhanced the bill. The final bill will make today's technology — from cell phones to websites — more accessible to us all. When Congress reconvenes in September, the House of Representatives will pass S 3304 under suspension, and the President will sign it into law. We can all be proud of the role that the American Council of the Blind, especially Eric Bridges, played in the advocacy efforts to promote the bill.

In July we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. I attended a gathering at the Ohio statehouse, one of many such celebrations nationwide. Speakers talked about the progress we've made and the work yet to be done. The Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act is a prime example of our progress.

On the state level, the Rehabilitation Services Commission held café conver-

sations all around Ohio in the spring and early summer. I hope many of you were able to attend a session near you. Participants' comments are posted on RSC's website at www.rsc.ohio.gov and in the current issue of *Ohio Ability*. Now the RSC senior administrative staff is working on a strategic plan for the agency that will incorporate the information gathered.

The ACB National Convention was held in Phoenix in July, where Ohio was well represented and everyone had a wonderful time. Mary Hiland, our executive director, served as ACB Ohio's official delegate. If you haven't attended a national ACB convention, your chance is coming, and you won't even need to leave Ohio! For the first time ever, Ohio will host the American Council of the Blind National Convention in Columbus in 2013. Let's all make it a priority to build enthusiasm for this upcoming event.

Our third annual Family Seminar will take place at the Ohio State School for the Blind on Saturday, September 25. Last year we had more than 60 attendees. Again this year we'll offer great speakers, exhibits and an opportunity for parents of blind and visually impaired children to meet and network with each other.

Also, don't forget to mark your calendar for the ACB Ohio Annual Convention November 5-7 at the Holiday Inn in Worthington. I hope to see you all there.

A Sneak Peek at the 2010 Convention

— *By Nolan Crabb*

Ask most people what November means to them and you'll likely get answers about fall weather, football or even the upcoming holiday season. Ask the same question of an ACB Ohio member and you'll likely hear about a conference that includes fascinating workshops and discussions, hands-on opportunities to see the latest technology, and a chance to reunite with old friends and meet new ones.

This year's ACB Ohio convention, "Accessibility and Communications Brings Opportunity," is slated for November 5 - 7 at Holiday Inn in Worthington. Convention workshops will include: "An Introduction to Technology: You can't Put it Off Any Longer," an interactive session for young people about fitting in with sighted friends, and a session on employment in which those who bring a resume can get help with it if desired.

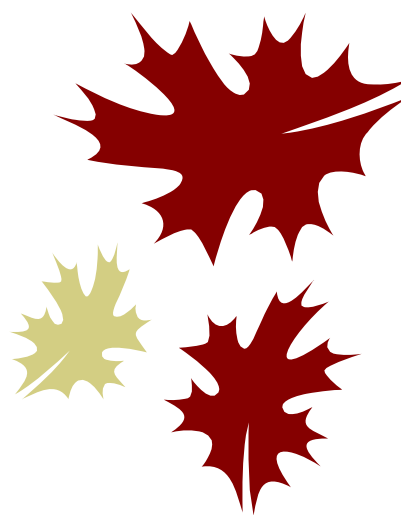
We'll also have an advanced technology workshop, a session on budgeting and wise ways to use your money, and a motivational speaker who is a successful audio engineer and producer.

Our Keynote speaker on Friday night will be Max Edelman, a survivor of the Holocaust and the creator of the Max Edelman scholarship, which is awarded by ACB of Ohio each year. NLS talking book narrator Anne Hancock will deliver the banquet address on Saturday.

Dozens of vendors will be showing off their wares in the exhibit hall throughout the weekend. The auction is a fantastic opportunity to raise funds for your chapter. Bring a basket or two filled with goodies for your fellow conventioners to bid on.

Save November 5 - 7 for a weekend of learning, growing and fun! Look for registration information in your mailbox soon. Those who receive the registration form on cassette should plan on receiving a printed form under separate cover.

**2010 ACB Ohio State
Convention
November 5-7
Holiday Inn at Worthington
7007 N. High Street**



From the Director's Chair — *By Mary Hiland*

As your delegate to the American Council of the Blind's national conference and convention, I boarded a plane to Phoenix on July 11. Imagine Phoenix, in the summer, with temperatures in the triple digits. What *were* they thinking? As I stepped off the plane, it felt like someone had left open the oven door. Then, as I entered the hotel, I felt like I had stepped into a meat locker. I quickly realized I was in trouble with the summer wardrobe I had packed.

Affiliates were asked in advance to donate door prizes and prepare baskets for the affiliate auction basket parade. I quickly collected what I had stashed at the ACB Ohio office and also in my home – such things as a “Participating in Life” t-shirt, an ACB Ohio coffee mug and an ACB Ohio cell phone charger. Of course, I also included a box of buckeye candies from Anthony Thomas.

I then contacted several sight centers around the state and asked them for small donations to add to our basket. Thanks to Magnifiers and More, the Toledo Sight Center, Clovernook, Vision and Vocational Services, and the Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired for their auction basket donations. Our basket was well received at the convention.

I was able to take many cost saving measures to lessen the total expense of the trip, including packing some food items for use during the week and buying supplies such as milk and fresh vegetables at a local grocery store. Sue

Wesley was kind enough to meet me when I arrived in Phoenix, direct me to the registration area, and assist me to my room. She also escorted me by taxi to the grocery store.

Grabbing a ham sandwich in my room between meetings was much more efficient than waiting in line at an overpriced restaurant in the hotel. I also saved money by opting for the hotel's “green” plan. By forgoing the house-keeping service, I earned \$5 in coupons daily for the hotel restaurant, and used them one night for dinner, making my dinner free.

There were many highlights throughout the week: The Sunday night opening ceremonies are always very emotional for me. Almost a thousand people gathered to learn and share about improving the quality and equality of life for people who are blind and visually impaired. I love the pomp and circumstance atmosphere, the presenting of the flag, singing of the national anthem, and the role call with assignments of votes.

I got to run up to the microphone and practice announcing how many votes Ohio would be casting – my big moment. I would be doing that several times during the week, as we took standing votes. Speaking of standing votes, they are working on a system of voting that will reestablish the secret ballot. Ohio has a pretty good system, and I'm glad we don't have the standing vote at our conventions.

Director's Chair — *Continued*

Monday afternoon, a bus load of us went to The Phoenix Rock Climbing Gym. I was probably the oldest participant, but I took my time and made it all the way to the top of a 30 foot wall. I earned a couple of scrapes from the experience and was a bit shaky when I got back down, but I felt good about accomplishing the challenge. As the folks at Ski for Light would say it was an "If I can do this, I can do anything" moment.

I made a date with a friend to escort me through the exhibit hall, stopping at every booth to say hello, pick up a freebie, enter a drawing, and in some cases, spend some money.

I attended the session on saving our schools for the blind. As you may know, they are being closed all over the country or combined with schools for children who are deaf. The feature was a telephone interview with Dan Kelly of OSSB and Sam Sheppard, one of the students in the OSSB band. Sam is a great example of someone from a school for the blind showing he can do anything mainstream kids can do. Unfortunately, they were preaching to the choir. The session should have been about what we as an organization can do about what is happening to these schools.

Two of this year's national scholarship recipients were from Ohio. Only one of the recipients was present, and I made a point of going to the scholarship winners' reception. It wasn't easy, but I finally found our gal, Sandy Sommers,

who lives in Canton. I will be talking with her soon about attending our state convention in November.

The Friends in Art Showcase is always a treat. I am always amazed at the talents on display. On Wednesday, I escaped the hotel and the convention to visit a downtown Phoenix Toastmasters Club. I hadn't intended to give a speech, just visit the club as something to do on my own, but they invited me to speak and I couldn't turn down the opportunity. My topic was the American Council of the Blind, so I wasn't really playing hooky after all.

On Thursday afternoon, I recorded the presidents' meeting for Linda Wyman. I also took some notes to share with the board.

I attended the membership and para-transit sessions, and in both, I learned that the problems we face are universal. On the last day, we elected board members and passed resolutions. Be sure to read the next issue of *The Braille Forum* to get those results. If you subscribe to the cassette version, you will be hearing highlight speeches and presentations from the daily general sessions, such as the progress on accessible currency and other important issues.

Next year's conference and convention will be in Reno. In 2012, it will be in Louisville again. And in 2013... Are you ready for this? It will be in Columbus, Ohio!

Tips for Successful Chapters — By Rob Rogers

1. Chapters should have 10 or more members in attendance at regular monthly meetings, with chapters contributing modest annual dues to the state and national ACB.

2. Chapters must have both a constitution and a set of bylaws that follow the rules of operation of ACB Ohio and the national ACB. The ACB model has a constitution for the structure and rules of operation and a set of bylaws that define day-to-day operations.

3. Chapters, which are independent organizations, as part of the ACB Ohio alliance, need to satisfy the objectives of serving people who are blind and visually impaired in a democratic operation – with voting membership, officers elected from the membership, and with a majority of members who are blind or visually impaired.

4. It is strongly recommended that chapters incorporate with the Ohio Secretary of State (SOS). There is a one time fee of \$125 with a \$25 renewal every five years. Banks are hesitant to open accounts for non-incorporated entities. You should also never receive or spend funds under the name of an individual. Contact the Ohio SOS at (614) 466-3910 (choose option 1).

5. Chapters that wish to apply to foundations for monetary grants should obtain an IRS 501(C) 3 non-profit tax status. However, it is not necessary if you operate very low key and are not handling much more than membership dues. It costs \$250 for the initial tax

status filing fee and it is considerable work filling out the IRS form 1023. With or without 501(C) 3 status, you need a federal tax ID obtained from the IRS if you have a bank account and handle funds. The IRS website is www.irs.gov and the phone number is (877) 829-5500.

6. It is imperative that chapters keep good records, especially if you are incorporated or if you have 501(C) 3 status. Be mindful of impending expiration dates. Also, make sure the SOS has current contact information to keep you abreast of developments. At the least, you will receive mailed warnings of expiration dates.

7. Run a tight ship: Keep clear minutes so that even an outsider can understand what took place in any meeting. Motions for money must be self-contained to trace authorizations. Give full names of movers and, if possible, for seconders of motions. For clarity, avoid using only first names in the minutes. The treasurer's report should give full accounting of beginning and ending balances, especially if you have more than just casual finances.

For more information, check out the ACB Ohio website at www.acbohio.org. Chapters may use the ACB Ohio constitution and bylaws as examples. Templates for these documents and more notes on chapter organization and incorporation, and IRS application information will be available online in the near future.

Keeping Connected — *By Marc Guthrie*

Since we last connected, Executive Director Mary Hiland, Board President Linda Wyman and I met with a representative of the non-profit organization Community Shares of Mid Ohio. We met with Community Shares to explore an affiliation for the purpose of becoming eligible to receive designated donations through the State of Ohio's Combined Charitable Campaign, and other Ohio employers.

Over 50,000 state employees have the option of earmarking donations through Ohio's Combined Charitable Campaign. In the long term, being an eligible charity to receive contributions through an affiliation with Community Shares of Mid Ohio could provide a new and dependable revenue source for ACB Ohio. A few of the 60 charities currently affiliated with Community Shares are ADA Ohio, the Ohio Domestic Violence Network, the Ohio Literacy Network, the Deaf Services Center, and the Vietnam Veterans of Ohio.

Although we are still in the preliminary stages of developing a relationship with Community Shares, it's well worth exploring the opportunity and we look forward to working with the ACB Ohio board in reviewing our options.

Community Shares also provides services to its member charities, such as assisting in marketing a charity's mission to a number of Ohio employers. This could be very valuable to ACB Ohio from an advocacy and fundraising standpoint.

Speaking of advocacy, have you had the opportunity lately to advocate for ACB Ohio's membership and our mission of service in support of people who are blind or visually impaired? All ACB Ohio members should view themselves as ambassadors for our good mission. We need to work together to let all Ohioans know that ACB Ohio is the flagship organization in standing up for people who are blind or visually impaired.

Finally, don't forget that the 2010 Building Blocks for a Brighter Future Family Seminar is coming up, and if you know families that might benefit from the event, please contact Executive Director Mary Hiland at (800) 835-2226 or via e-mail at mary.hiland@sbcglobal.net.

Until we next connect, I wish you the best.

Marc Guthrie provides counsel to ACB Ohio on fundraising and advocacy matters. His e-mail address is marcguthrie@hotmail.com.

Contributors . . .

Thank you to ACB Ohio members who contributed to this issue of the *Ohio Connection*: **Nolan Crabb, Marc Guthrie, Mary Hiland, Carl Kienzle, Joyce Rogers, Rob Rogers, and Linda Wyman.**

Matching Chapter Grants Available

— *By Carl Kienzle*

Cleveland, Marion, Medina, Mansfield, all chapters come on down! The Price is Right game show seems like easy money and prizes doesn't it? Well, it's not a game show, but all chapters have an opportunity to get easy money for special projects and to purchase needed equipment through the ACB Ohio's Matching Grants program. Grants are available for up to \$500 per chapter.

All chapters need to do is to write a letter of application with the following details:

- 1) Reason for request.
- 2) Total amount requested up to \$500 annually.
- 3) Total amount the chapter has raised toward the requested project.
- 4) How the matching grant will benefit or impact your chapter's members or organization as a whole.
- 5) Chapter contact information.

Applications are voted on quarterly by the ACB Ohio board. E-mail applications to mary.hiland@sbcglobal.net or call (800) 835-2226 for more information. Soon your chapter could have funds to do something great!

Membership Awards

— *By Carl Kienzle*

We will once again be celebrating growing chapters at the ACB Ohio state convention in November. Two membership awards will be presented – one for the greatest percentage increase in new membership and one for the greatest number of new members.

Chapters should submit the names of members who joined between the dates of February 16 and September 30, 2010 to me at carlkienzle@yahoo.com or Executive Director Mary Hiland at mary.hiland@sbcglobal.net no later than Friday, October 1, 2010. Then join us for the convention in November and see if your chapter is a winner!

Coffee Fundraiser

Coming this November we will have an exciting addition to the annual convention! ACB Ohio is teaming up with Ohio Roaster to sell a “personal label” coffee chosen specifically for ACB Ohio members and friends.

You can pick up a bag or two at the convention for only \$10 each. We expect the coffee to sell fast as many members are already planning to buy them as fall and holiday gifts. Once you smell the coffee you'll be hooked!

To ensure you're guaranteed a bag, e-mail carlkienzle@yahoo.com or call Mary Hiland at (800) 835-2226.

Reading Braille Program Seeks Entries

— *By Joyce Rogers*

ACB Ohio's Reading Braille Program is aimed at children in Ohio who are blind or visually impaired between the ages of eight and 16. Readers may choose any book that offers the reader both enjoyment and a new insight.

Readers then need to complete the entry form found on the ACB Ohio website at www.acbohio.org and submit it with a 150-200 word essay on the topic "Why I Enjoyed Reading This Book."

Each child who submits a completed application and an acceptable essay will receive a book of his or her choice from the Seedlings Catalogue, and he or she will be entered in the Arlene Cohen Braille Essay Contest. The Essay Contest was created in memory of Arlene Cohen, an outstanding and dedicated teacher and former president of the American Council of the Blind of Ohio.

Prizes for the Essay Contest include a \$100 first prize, \$75 second prize, and a \$50 third prize for each of two age groups (8 to 12 year olds and 13 to 16 year olds). Applications will be accepted between September 7 and October 27, 2010. Winners will receive monetary prizes at an event in their honor in their home town. Please include the title and author of a book you would like to own from the Seedlings Catalogue on the application. A book will be awarded each month of the con-

test to participants who submit a satisfactory essay. One entry per person.

Send your completed applications and essays to:

Arlene Cohen Braille Essay Contest
c/o Joyce Rogers
1121 Morado Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45238

If you have any questions, you may contact me via e-mail at jarogers@one.net or call (513) 921-3186.

The ***Ohio Connection*** is a quarterly publication of The American Council of the Blind of Ohio. Please submit your material in print or through e-mail. The next deadline is November 22, 2010. Please include your name, address and phone number and send to: Terri Kevany, Editor, at takevany@roadrunner.com or call (216) 251-0484.

ACBO recently updated its mailing list. If someone you know has not been receiving Ohio Connection, please have them contact the office to be returned to our list.

Board Meeting Highlights — *By Mary Hiland*

The Board of Directors of ACB Ohio met at the Vision and Vocational Services in Columbus on July 24. The meeting was productive as usual. Please don't hesitate to contact me with your input regarding any of the work of our board.

- We were greeted with the rich aroma of freshly ground gourmet coffee. Carl Kienzle brought and made coffee from a gourmet roaster for us to try as a fundraising idea.
- After enjoying the coffee, there was general excitement and support for this project. It was suggested that we start selling the coffee at the convention and use it as speaker gifts. It was agreed that we would pay \$5 per 12 ounce bag and sell them for \$10 each — a 100 percent profit. Chapters can also order bags to sell and split the profits with the state office. Mary Hiland suggested the label "American Council of the Blind of Ohio Eye-Opener Blend."
- Jill Noble suggested holding a legislative day in the spring.
- Linda Wyman asked the board for ideas to increase membership.
- Because transportation is a big problem for people who are blind or visually impaired, it was suggested we make a concerted effort to identify solutions.
- Mary Hiland reported that the development committee with All Aboard

Ohio is planning to mobilize students for this cause.

- It was agreed that we should hold a strategic planning session in January. The strategic planning committee will be in charge of leading that session. Board officers, newly elected board members, George Barnes, and any other interested persons will be asked to participate.
- Rob Rogers reported that PayPal is in place for the website, but he is not fully satisfied with the results of the testing. He will let us know when it is ready. It was agreed that we should look into the feasibility of accepting credit card payments and Mary Hiland agreed to work on that with Heartland Bank.
- The technology committee suggested creating a phone-cast and a phone blast on.
- Jacque Perry will send out a request for suggestions of potential convention exhibitors.
- Linda Wyman announced that the business meeting at the convention will be shortened. Elections will be held first and time for reports will be limited. Speakers will also be seated close to the microphones to save time.
- It was reported that the Winter Sports Retreat will remain the same price as last year.

APH InSights 2010 Art Competition Winners

— *By Joyce Rogers*

Early in July, Sharon Bazzle, a member of the American Council of the Blind of Ohio Greater Cincinnati Chapter (GCC), received the exciting news that she won third place in the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) art competition that includes artists who are visually impaired of all ages and of varying abilities in the U. S. and Canada.

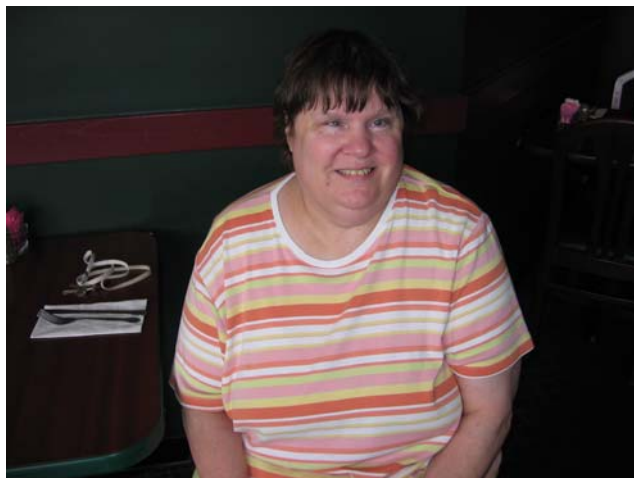
Sharon is a first time winner. When told of her award Sharon said, "I was surprised, elated, and just so happy."

Sharon won in the category of sculpture for her sculpture of a sheep "Just Trying to Sleep." Sharon will be honored at an awards ceremony in Louisville in October. The InSights 2010 Art Exhibition will showcase 83 works of art at the Galt House Hotel October 14 - 16. Sharon will receive \$100 plus travel expenses and a ribbon. She said that she is not sure she wants to sell her winning piece; she may want to keep it and treasure it.

APH started the art competition 19 years ago to promote creativity and originality in art among people with visual impairments. Professional artists, hobbyists, and school age children participate. InSights 2010 had 363 entries in nine categories and will honor forty-one artists this year.

Sharon started her work in sculpture at a class at Clovernook Center for the Blind in Cincinnati just a year ago. Sharon has high praise Clovernook's art teacher Scott Wallace. She says that

Scott sees himself as a catalyst in the process, but definitely not someone who interferes with the artists and their creations.



InSights 2010 Winner Sharon Bazzle

Sharon does not consider herself a professional artist, but she doesn't have to be to enjoy creating beauty and in bringing delight to others. Congratulations to Sharon. We are indeed proud of you.

Jane Strohmeier, a second prize winner for sculpture this year, is also a member of ACB Ohio GCC. Jane's entry was an aristocratic giraffe titled, "Reginald." Jane has won prizes in the APH InSights five times, and she said that she is thrilled each time she wins. Jane is a senior citizen who became visually impaired later in life. Congratulations, Jane!

For all other budding artists out there who may want to enter your work in APH InSights 2011, you may call Roberta Williams at APH at (502) 895-2405 for more information.

Ohio Connection
American Council of the Blind
Ohio Chapter
P.O. Box 307128
Fall 2010

**Free Matter
for the Blind or
Handicapped
P.O. Manual
Part 138**



Join the New ACB Ohio List — *By Rob Rogers*

There is now an e-mail list available for all current, paid members of the American Council of the Blind of Ohio. This list posts information as it becomes available, and members can exchange information with others simply by sending their posts to acbo-ohio@emissives.com.

The list can accept attachments of modest size. List members are expected to

transmit messages of general interest and should remain courteous and professional at all times.

Please send your name and e-mail address to rrrogers@nuvox.net to join the list. Membership in good standing will be verified by chapter membership chairs. For questions, please contact Robert Rogers at (513) 921-3186.