Fall 2014 Ohio Connection

American Council of the Blind of Ohio

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Columbus, OH 43214

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# WHEN TAKING THE LONG VIEW MAKES SENSE

## by Nolan Crabb

“I walk slowly,” once remarked Abraham Lincoln, “but I never walk backward.” I love the irrepressible optimism of that quote. I became intimately acquainted with the concept when, at age 12, I was working with an orientation and mobility instructor on safe street crossings. I grew up in a community that had been laid out and planned by Brigham Young. One of Brother Brigham’s rules when he laid out a city was that a full wagon and horse team must be able to turn around in the center of the street without touching either side. When you’re a kid learning mobility, those wide streets can create some serious heart-pounding fear. On one occasion, I was so filled with the self-doubt that rapidly breeds on the fear that I wouldn’t make it to the opposite curb before being snuffed out by a light change and a speeding car that I actually started to walk backward toward what I perceived to be the safety of the curb I’d recently left. The unyielding hand of my instructor clamped down hard on my shoulder.

“Crabb, I don’t ever want to see you backing up like that in an intersection again! Is that clear? You don’t have the protection of your cane when you behave stupidly like that, and you can’t even really tell whether you’re backing up straight or at an angle. That will never happen again, and I don’t want to hear any excuses.” That stern voice with its logic and sound reasoning were miraculous antidotes to my childish fears, and I crossed to the opposite side of the street rapidly and without incident.

As I think back on the history of blindness in this country as I know it, there were plenty of times when advocates and their friends could have yearned for the apparent safety of the curb behind them rather than pressing forward to the opposite side of the street with its better vistas and untrammeled paths. How much sense did it make for blind advocates to approach Senator Reed Smoot of Utah and one of his counterparts in the House, Ruth Pratt, to push for legislation that would create what is now the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped? The United States of the 1930s was a bleak and nearly broken place in many regards. Certainly expending federal dollars to institute a new library program for blind people was ill advised at a time when revenues were low and national morale was lower. The crosswalk of doing nothing in the name of fiscal responsibility must have looked inviting to those few who cast a nervous glance behind them. But those advocates pressed on, and today, because they crossed that difficult intersection, we benefit hugely from books on digital cartridges and thousands of books that can be downloaded at the press of a key. Had those advocates danced backward, they would have been crushed by the vehicles of illiteracy, and we would likely have perished as well.

The opposition to audio description by disparate groups, from the movie industry to the American Civil Liberties Union, was at one time fierce and unrelenting. How easy it would have been for those who believed in the concept to leap backward to the safety of the curb from which they had so recently stepped, but they pressed forward. Today, the Department of Justice is moving to mandate that nearly all theaters have audio description capability in the near future.

As I look back on the past nearly four years in which I have been president of ACBO, I can think of times when, if left to my own shortcomings, I would have rushed pell-mell backward for the safety of a curb that didn’t include me being president. But I was surrounded throughout the entire time by the most remarkable men and women in leadership of any ACB affiliate in the nation. They stepped forward in unity and offered the hand of charity to me when I needed it most—a collective hand on my shoulder and a firm aggregate voice that said, “Let’s find a way to move forward; we can beat the adversity light and get safely to the crosswalk.” Invariably, they were right.

I have every certainty that, following the election in October, ACBO will move forward grandly and in impressive ways. I look forward to being among those who encourage the new leadership in its forward motion. I’m keenly aware of the times in the last four years when I have walked too slowly or perhaps even stumbled. But when I remembered to reach out to the leadership of the affiliate, I found in all of them a quiet strength that made the long view seem far less daunting and the crosswalk ahead less distant and formidable. I’m grateful for the confidence the majority of you placed in me on two separate occasions to take that step into the intersection and move forward. I have no doubt that there will be times in our future when we as an affiliate will have to, as Mr. Lincoln said, “walk slowly.” But I’m equally confident that, like him, we will never have to walk backward.

CONNECTING CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

By Katie Frederick

*Photo caption 1: Vicky Prahin and Katie Frederick on their way to the banquet*

*Photo caption 2: Rebecca Schumacher gets “arrested” at the Mob Museum*

*Photo Caption 3: Vicky Prahin works the information desk*

*Photo Caption 4: Sandy Mollett (Columbus Chapter) and Chris Schumacher (Cincinnati Chapter) atop the Stratosphere*

*Photo Caption 5: Melody Banks (Cincinnati Chapter) and Lourdes Marcus take a gondola ride at the Venetian*

Often when we think of summer, images of barbecues and vacations come to mind. For the American Council of the Blind, the summer season is the time when the annual conference and convention occurs. The 2014 conference and convention took place July 10-19 at the Riviera Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. Tours, technology, rehabilitation, transportation, advocacy, and healthcare were just a few offerings to choose from. I represented ACB-Ohio at the affiliate president’s meeting, provided information and assistance to attendees at the AT&T-sponsored information desk, and was elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the American Council of the Blind. If you were unable to attend or were there but want to relive the experience, archives of the morning general sessions, as well as some recorded workshops, may be found by visiting [www.acbradio.org](http://www.acbradio.org). You may also now listen to ACB Radio on your phone by dialing (231) 460-1047 (note: long-distance charges may apply).

Be sure to mark October 24-26 on your calendar to attend the gathering of the American Council of the Blind of Ohio. This year’s event will take place at the Holiday Inn Eastgate in Cincinnati. Room rates are $95 plus tax per night; to make reservations, call (513) 752-4400, or book online at http:// <http://tinyurl.com/oepcels>. Online registration will be available again this year, but, if you prefer a paper form or to register over the phone, call the office, and I will be more than happy to assist you.

I hope you have had a relaxing summer and are looking ahead, as I am, to the change of seasons autumn will bring.

RESOLUTION ROUNDUP

by Jill Noble

Late at night during national convention week, the members of the Resolutions Committee are busy reading and reviewing resolutions which have been submitted; sometimes they need to work with the author of a resolution in order to make sure that the intent of the resolution is accurately conveyed when presented during general session.

This year in addition to recognizing the convention committee, volunteers, and the hotel staff for their hard work and dedication to the American Council of the Blind for a successful convention week, 17 resolutions were read, discussed, and voted on by the convention body. Some of the issues outlined in the resolutions adopted, two of which were brought forth by fellow Ohioans, included equal access to public and university library digital collections, access to Medicare forms, appropriate braille and mobility instruction for students who are blind or visually impaired, and changes in postal regulations that are already affecting home delivery service in some parts of the country.

A complete list of the 2014 resolutions, along with a summary of each, will be posted in the near future at [www.acb.org](http://www.acb.org).

A SNEAK PEEK AT THE 2014 ACBO CONVENTION

by Lori Woodall

As you read this, we are fast approaching the 2014 convention. Our program starts on Friday with informative break-out sessions, including a look at some low-tech goodies and terrific exhibits! The Friday evening speaker will share some fun and interesting facts about Clermont County, where the Holiday Inn is located. Following our keynote speaker, we will select teams to play "Friendly Feud.” On Saturday Hal McCoy, the Cincinnati Reds writer at FOXSportsOhio.com and a former beat writer for the Dayton Daily News, will speak at breakfast. More fabulous sessions will follow, including a look at some technology and building your own boat! At lunchtime Marc Guthrie and Vicky Prahin will present the scholarship awards for this year. After lunch we have some more great sessions, such as fashion and color coordination, what your pharmacist can do for you, and the biggest surprise of all: a petting zoo. Our banquet speaker is Ray Foushee from the American Printing House for the Blind. Of course, we will have the auction on Saturday evening; bring items for this event. On Sunday morning there will be a worship service. After breakfast we will have a brief memorial service for those who have passed away this year; provide names to Lori Woodall as soon as possible at 513-876-3351 or by e-mail at [resoj6mv@frontier.com](mailto:resoj6mv@frontier.com). We would like to recognize any veterans present. Nolan Crabb and Katie Frederick will take a bite out of Apple TV.

MORE CONVENTION FUN

by Carl Kienzle

The exhibitors and vendors hall is one of the most exciting parts of the ACBO convention! Save up your pennies and open your mind to new exciting products and information from the Cincinnati Association for the Blind, the State Library, adaptive technology experts, guide dog schools, and many others. You will also find raffle tickets, baked goods, coffee, crafts, and gadgets. We will have many familiar vendors and some new ones! So get ready and sign up to be part of the excitement when convention registration hits your mailbox!

Contact the ACBO office, 800-835-2226; Linda Wyman, 614-846-7268; or Carl Kienzle, 937-361-6909 with any questions or ideas for new vendors.

ACB-OHIO AWARDS

Show your admiration and respect for someone with a nomination for one of ACBO’s awards. Anyone who has helped to improve life for the blind or visually impaired by giving time or talent; an organization that has donated money, volunteers, or service; or anyone who contributes to public media in a way that benefits the blind is eligible for an award. Send your nominations to Terry Olandese at olandese@fuse.net.

PROPOSED SLATE for 2014 ELECTIONS

by Jill Noble

The nominating committee offers the following slate for consideration:

OFFICERS:

President: Vicky Prahin

2nd Vice-President: Robert Rogers

Treasurer: Christopher Schumacher

ACBO DIRECTORS

Terry Olandese, Thomas Dimit, Leah Noble, Theresa Carroll, Jenna Karg, Irwin Hott

We have an open seat on the board, so nominate someone during the elections!

FROM THE DESK OF THE RECREATION CHAIRMAN

by Chris Schumacher

*Photo caption: Retreat participants at the Belleville lock tour*

The summer has been filled with a flurry of activities. Among other things, I went rafting with a group of friends down the Great Miami River on July 4th.

While I was in Las Vegas for the national conference and convention, I assisted on some of the tours. The thrill seeker tour involved riding several roller coasters. I also got to visit the Mob Museum and Hoover Dam. Other tours I was unable to attend included sky diving, river rafting, and a trip to the Grand Canyon. I enjoyed assisting in a demo of goalball.

The summer sports retreat took place during the first weekend of August. There were eight new participants this year. We had a new treat, a tour of the Belleville lock. Mark Benson gave us a great tour and information session about how the lock works and why the locks are needed. We had to deal with a little bit of rain during the weekend, but I had a great time, and I believe the rest of the group did as well. One of the new people wrote about his experience for this newsletter.

I am looking forward to goalball beginning in September. I really enjoy participating in the sport and hope our group will attend the tournament again next year. I have missed my teammates that I have not seen over the summer.

There is a change in the winter sports retreat for 2015. Since Punderson will be remodeling, we will have to hold it in a new place. We are in negotiations with Maumee Bay State Park. I will have more information at the state convention.

The State convention will be held in Cincinnati, October 24-26. The fun on Friday night will be a version of Family Feud. I will be the host again this year. I look forward to the fun and seeing all the participants.

Remember to stay active!

A WEEKEND OF NONSTOP FUN AND FRIENDSHIP

by Alex Densmore

At the ACB National Convention in Las Vegas this year, I met another Ohioan who quickly became my friend and told me about the ACBO Summer Sports Retreat. I had never known that such an event existed, and given my love of camping, rivers, and the outdoors in general, I decided that this would be the perfect way to spend the first weekend of August. I already expected that the weekend would be fun, but the Summer Sports Retreat exceeded my expectations in every way!

As soon as all of us arrived on Friday afternoon, we took a tour of a lock on the Ohio River. We walked on a walkway across the gates that open and shut at the ends of the lock to let boats in and out; we heard the sounds of sirens and whistles that serve as signals for boaters to let them know when it is and is not safe to enter, exit, and be near the lock; and we stood three feet from the edge of a lock wall as a gigantic barge carrying sand passed through.

The rest of the weekend included completely unscheduled events, giving it a very laidback feel. We actually camped near the Hocking River. We drove golf carts, had campfires, played braille Scrabble and Euchre, and ate some of the most delicious food I’ve ever eaten. My personal favorites included deep-fried turkey, homemade pickles, hotdogs with homemade chili sauce, and fresh corn on the cob. We rode and drove a pontoon boat on the Ohio River, rode and drove a jet ski, and went tubing.

The weekend was also a time of strengthening preexisting friendships and building new ones. I felt welcomed by everyone in the group from the moment I arrived, and it seems that everyone else who was attending for the first time felt the same. The event was multi-generational, and those who had attended for years were eager to accept those of us who are younger and newer to ACBO. My tent mates and I, who called ourselves “The Four Blind Mice,” did not sleep for a single minute Friday night because we stayed up talking, laughing, and listening to songs from the Disney movie Frozen, in multiple languages. For those who value sleep, don’t worry; all other campers actually had the sense to sleep Friday night, and we verified that we did not keep anyone else up. I am confident that the friendships I formed and strengthened at the retreat will be long-lasting and rewarding.

I will without a doubt be attending this retreat again next year, and I would encourage those of you who have never attended to do the same. The event was entirely worth the very reasonable price of $85 for participants. Anyone who attends the event is sure to have an absolute blast!

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY UPDATE

by Marc Guthrie

As a member of the US Access Board, advocating for Americans with disabilities, I encourage you to visit the Access Board website and sign up for “Access Currents,” the Board’s electronic newsletter. Visit <http://www.access-board.gov/> to sign up. Read about such important issues as making prescription drug labeling more accessible. Though I am not a representative of ACB on the Board, my experience with ACBO increases my awareness of access issues regarding people who are blind and visually impaired.

I continue in my effort to serve as ACBO’s liaison with Wright State University (WSU), the University of Toledo (UT), and The Ohio State University (OSU), where we have endowed scholarships. Though all three endowments are doing well, the UT endowment is the most solid, with a balance of nearly $65,000. ACBO Executive Director Katie Frederick and I recently met with Bill Shepard, WSU Associate Vice-President for Advancement, and Tom Webb, WSU’s new Director of Disability Services, so that we could get to know Tom. Tom is a dynamic addition to WSU’s leadership team and a very strong advocate for students with disabilities. We discussed ideas for growing our endowment at Wright State and offered our assistance in making it happen.

I also enjoy my ongoing role as ACBO’s link with the Ohio Lions Foundation, which has been enormously generous to us over the last decade. The foundation is highly committed to serving Ohioans who are blind and visually impaired. I feel our relationship with the Lions will continue to grow.

I represent ACBO’s interest as a member of the OSU Advisory Board for their Visual Impairment Teacher Training Program. The advisory committee meets at least three times annually to review the teacher training program, which operates with a significant federal grant from the US Department of Education.

Though fundraising is no longer part of my role at ACBO, I try to be helpful in this area when I can. This spring I was instrumental in procuring a $1,000 donation from Enterprise Holdings Foundation and Ryan Dieter, who is a Columbus area employee with Enterprise Car Rental. In conversing with Mr. Dieter, I believe that I was helpful in securing ongoing support from him, via the Enterprise Holdings Foundation, which makes employee-directed donations to nonprofits like ours. In addition, I’m working with a long-time member and leader of the Pythian Sisters, who is trying to secure a donation from the Knights of Ohio Pythians for ACBO’s mission.

I hope to see you all in Cincinnati.

UNITED DISABILITY SERVICES’ LOW VISION CLINIC

MOVES TO NEW LOCATION

by Lisa Armstrong

United Disability Services (UDS), a social service, not-for-profit agency, is celebrating 65 years of meeting the social, vocational, educational, community living, low vision and transportation needs of people with disabilities. The mission of UDS is to enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities and their caregivers by providing the highest quality, client-focused programs and services. The Low Vision Clinic has moved to the agency’s main office at 701 S. Main Street in Akron. Dr. Cheryl Reed and her staff are now seeing patients at the new location. The office phone number has changed to 330-762-9755.

UDS Low Vision Services serves more than 350 adults and children with visual impairments throughout northeast Ohio each year. An individual is considered to have low vision when vision cannot be corrected with ordinary glasses, surgery or medical treatment, and adversely impacts everyday activities.

The clinic provides low vision assessments, orientation and mobility training, instruction by teachers of visually impaired students, a bioptic driving program in collaboration with Edwin Shaw Rehab, and the opportunity for patients to try a variety of low vision aids and adaptive equipment, such as special reading or telescopic glasses, hand-held magnifiers, large print or talking devices, special lighting, and closed-circuit television systems. To be considered eligible for services, candidates must have had an eye exam within the past year. Referrals are required and can be made by eye care professionals, schools, or community agencies. For more information call UDS Low Vision Services or visit [www.udsakron.org](http://www.udsakron.org).

REACHING THE HEIGHTS

by Joyce Rogers

Mary Beth Donelan is a member of the Greater Cincinnati Chapter. She has played a key role in the chapter's participation in the Flying Pig Marathon since we began running or walking in that event in 2010. She was my guide in 2011 when I walked the half marathon. Mary Beth and 11 companions recently returned from climbing Kilimanjaro, the highest free-standing mountain in the world, to raise money for the student exchange program at Nativity School in Cincinnati. They spent treasured moments of the Fourth of July on the summit. Mary Beth is a teacher's assistant at Nativity School and the mother of four Nativity graduates. The principal and parents of two current Nativity students were among the climbers.

Since 1980, Nativity students have participated in the program called "Global Perspective." They learn all the countries of the world, their capitals, their locations on a world map, and something about the people who live there. Beginning in grade five, students have the opportunity to visit many of those countries. Twice per year on average, ten or more students travel to China, Germany, Mexico, Australia, or other countries to attend school for two weeks with native students. Mary Beth said, "Just months ago, a Nativity student gave a talk in Chinese to the entire school he was visiting in China. Were all his listeners impressed and very moved? You bet they were!"

Mary Beth has an adult daughter who served as a teacher in the rural areas of Thailand. She credits her daughter's experiences at Nativity and her visits to Germany and Finland as giving her the courage to reach out to some of the least advantaged people in the world.

Mary Beth said, "My companions and I were able to make the climb only because we had the help of three guides and the carrying capacity of 48 porters. We could not have accomplished the climb without them. We in America are truly blessed, and we in turn owe so very much to others."

The goal of the fund-raising climb was $19,340, one dollar for each

foot climbed. The team reached that goal even before the climb. Now, many more Nativity School students can make connections with friends all over the world.

For more information about global learning or Kilimanjaro climbing, visit the following web sites: [www.nativity-cincinnati.org/school/global-education/](http://www.nativity-cincinnati.org/school/global-education/) and www.tusker.com/tusker-treks.aspx.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

I hope this will become a regular column in which chapters from all over Ohio can share news and ideas.

Stark County -- Our chapter received a letter from the IRS reinstating its 501(C)(3) status. We are really glad to have gotten past that hurdle. Fourteen people attended the annual picnic in August. Chapter representatives will be featured on a local radio station to talk about the bill identifier and audible prescription labels.

Greater Cincinnati – The GCC held its award ceremony on August 19. We divided the $2,000 George Coorey scholarship between Jenny Ham, a graduate of Sycamore High School, and Jonathan Thomas from Fairfield High School. Jenny will attend the University of Cincinnati to become a dietician, and Jonathan is going to Wright State University to study psychology. We presented the Sue Wesley award to Lita Wesley, the Ken Marrs award to TUKANDU Cycling Club Inc., and the Bob Kraus award to GCC’s secretary, Mary Ann Donelan. Our new award, the ACBOGCC Lifetime Membership Award, is given to a member of GCC who has given outstanding service and dedication to the Greater Cincinnati Chapter. The first winner of this award is Leah Noble.

GCC and the Western Hills Lions Club have an annual picnic, usually on the third Saturday in May. We’ve just changed the location of this picnic, so our September 15th meeting will be at Winton Woods. This way our chapter can have a meeting, a little fun, and a trial run for the picnic in May of 2015.

You’re all invited to come to GCC’s fourth quarter auction at 120 Washington Ave. in St. Bernard, Saturday, November 8 from 2 till 5. There will be lots of food for sale, door prizes, and the chance to bid on lots of great items. If you’d like to donate something for our quarter auction, contact our quarter auction chairperson, Lori Woodall, at 513-876-3351.

Eye On Summit – We have done some fun things in the last few months and have more planned for the fall. In May we went on an azalea walk in a nearby nature park and had a picnic lunch. In June we had someone come in to get our thoughts and ideas about features we’d like to be incorporated into an O&M device he plans to develop. Our annual cookout takes place in July. In September we will participate in the annual Akron White Cane walk, and in October we’ll have a potluck lunch with crafts and hikes in a local park if the weather is good.

Appleseed -- Our chapter just celebrated the ten-year anniversary of the Loss of Vision support group (LOV), eventually incorporated into the ACB-Ohio Appleseed chapter, at our annual picnic sponsored by the Ontario Lions Club. Many of our founding members were in attendance & recognized for their contributions to our mission in a ceremony. Several community leaders were present, including the Mayor of Ontario; the Executive Director of the Richland County Mental Health Board; a representative from the District 5 Area Agency on Aging; members from the Ontario, Bellville, Butler, and Lucas Lions clubs; and reporters from the Mansfield News Journal & WMFD news network. It was a great time to share memories & look through scrapbooks of past highlights of social events & our meetings featuring a diversity of speakers. We look forward to our next ten years of mutual support & advocacy for those who are challenged with vision loss.

Columbus – In addition to the CD yard sale you read about last time, Columbus chapter members have heard from a speaker from the Arthritis Foundation on the importance of stretching and exercise and from Nolan Crabb on preparing for emergencies. Several members spent an afternoon at COSI, exploring exhibits and experimenting. We had a record turn-out for the picnic in July. In the fall a representative from the League of Women Voters will talk about the issues and candidates on the November ballot and answer questions about voting, Ray Foeller from the Ohio Consumers’ Counsel will educate the group about that agency, and we will host a representative from Mayor Coleman’s office.

BITS AND BYTES

by Elizabeth Sammons

Did you miss the National Association of the Deaf conference, or maybe you just want to learn more about NAD? It's hard to summarize the entire conference into 25 fantastic experiences -- but enjoy!

[www.nad.org/](http://www.nad.org/).

The Disability Connection Newsletter highlights ten things you may not know about the ADA, plus much more!

<https://www.disability.gov/disability-connection-newsletter-july-2014>.

Ohio's online eligibility system for income-based programs has been updated to identify veterans. With the individual's consent, basic information is electronically forwarded to the Ohio Department of Veterans Services and the local County Veterans Service Office. The county office then contacts the individual to discuss all of the benefits that may be available, including health care coverage and employment opportunities. To visit the Ohio Benefits site, go to <https://www.benefits.ohio.gov/>.

This updated page includes new places to get audio description on demand on the web:

<http://netflixproject.wordpress.com/audio-description-on-demand/>.

Microsoft has started a free program for people with disabilities through which technicians access computers in need of repair and fix what they can remotely. The service number is 800-936-5900. For more information, such as calling hours, see

<http://support.microsoft.com/gp/contact-microsoft-accessibility>.

A University of Cincinnati device may replace the white cane. The device uses infrared sensors to detect objects in front of it. When it picks up on an obstacle, it sends a vibration to an attached wristband. As the user gets closer to the obstacle, the vibration intensifies. Users can take that feedback to navigate. See [www.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/news/2014/](http://www.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/news/2014/).

On September 29, participate in the Swing Fore Sight Golf Tournament, Cincinnati at the Maketewah Golf and Country Club. Event proceeds will support programs like “Star Pupils,” which prevents vision loss in preschoolers so that they can start school “ready to learn.” Find out about the event at

[www.ohio.preventblindness.org/2014-swing-fore-sight-golf-tournament-cincinnati](http://www.ohio.preventblindness.org/2014-swing-fore-sight-golf-tournament-cincinnati).

Read some good advice for hands-on strategies; the article promises, "students with disabilities will get more job and internship offers if you take this class.” <http://goo.gl/PfKXu8>.

Interested in study abroad? Join a free virtual meet-up presented by Mobility International USA (MIUSA) and the National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN). You’ll meet other students with disabilities who have traveled the world and learn about scholarship opportunities that can take you abroad. U.S. high school students and recent graduates with disabilities, their parents, and professionals who work with youth with disabilities are invited! Sign up for the meet-up and find tools to spread the word on social media! <http://miusa.us1.list-manage.com/>.

Editor: Vicky Prahin; Assistant Editor: Michelle Spillan

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ACBO Datebook

October 15, National White Cane Safety Day

October 24-26, ACBO Conference & Convention, Eastgate Holiday Inn

November 15, Deadline for newsletter items

January 16-19, Winter Sports Retreat at Maumee Bay State Park

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 15, 2014. Please include your name, address, and phone number and send to: Vicky Prahin at [vicky@hadley.edu](mailto:vicky@hadley.edu).

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