



Spring 2015

## Ohio Connection

American Council of the Blind of Ohio  
3805 N. High St., Ste. 305  
Columbus, OH 43214  
1-800-835-2226

### Letter from the Editor

— *By Theresa Carroll, ACBO Board Member & Newsletter Editor, Toledo, OH*

**G**reetings from Toledo! Thank you for the opportunity to be of service as Editor of the ACBO newsletter.

Let me share a little about who I am. I am relatively new to the community of low vision and of the blind. While I am sighted, my “life partner” Tom is legally blind. Since his challenges began, I have had a true heart for advocating for the visually impaired. I am an Ohio transplant from Florida by way of New Jersey and have lived all over the eastern seaboard states. I have a good dose of wanderlust and a curious nature that has so far left me relatively unscathed. It is my honor to serve as Editor here as well as on the Board of ACBO.

The winter retreat was great fun! As first timers there, Tom and I were unsure what to expect. We found ourselves quickly and warmly welcomed into the group. Whether playing cards, hiking or just socializing, we drifted off to sleep nightly with sore bellies from laughing so hard. We look forward to being at Punderson next year, and I en-

courage you all to join us there. I can assure you that a good time will be had by all, as it has been a rollicking good time for those in attendance for years now.

In service to the board, Tom and I had the honor of joining Katie Frederick and Vicky Prahin as half of the delegation from Ohio for the mid-year conference and legislative sessions in Washington, DC. It was our first time attending and we were excited to be a part of such an important mission. I truly enjoyed meeting with our Ohio legislators’ senior staff and sharing the ACB legislative imperatives with them. You’ll learn more about those imperatives in articles in this edition. We also had the pleasure of meeting so many of the ACB members and officers from all around our fine nation.

True to our experience, nothing ever comes easy. It took Tom and me a total of nine flight bookings to finally arrive in Washington from Detroit. The winter weather wrought havoc on our travel plans, but we finally made it, only one

day late. Old man winter had his own plans, and he is far more powerful than little old me. To make matters worse, on one of our layovers in La Guardia, we were introduced to the fine people of the “Big Apple” by having our wallets lifted. As the saying goes: No good deed goes unpunished. None of those obstacles deterred us from our mission. We hope to soon learn that the efforts of the delegation will bear fruit. I encourage all of you to reach out to your elected members of Congress and ask for their support of the imperatives listed in Katie Frederick’s article.

Included in this issue are several ways that you can become more active in ACBO and its mission. I encourage all of you to join us at the State Convention and in any number of projects that are forthcoming. Your participation is essential if ACBO is to flourish and improve the lives of the visually impaired throughout Ohio.

I’m new to editing a newsletter. Pardon me if I leave anything out that you were expecting. I welcome your thoughts, critiques and suggestions. If you have any articles you’d like to include in the next issue or anything you’d care to share, please email me at [acbo.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:acbo.newsletter@gmail.com).

My best to you.



## Who We Are and What We Do

— *By Vicky Prahin,  
President of the ACBO  
Board of Directors*

Article III of our constitution says, in part, that the purpose of ACB-Ohio is to promote the quality and equality of life for blind and visually impaired Ohioans in the areas of employment, education, recreation, and social activities. Have you ever thought about what we do to meet those goals? To give you some idea, here are a few programs and services we provide.

During her time as Executive Director, Ann Gazelle began to meet quarterly with representatives with the agency now known as Opportunities of Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). Her foresight in this area is paying dividends as we get to know the personnel better and work with Deputy Director Mindy Duncan and her staff to assist in providing training for counselors, ensure the availability of accessible documentation for all interested parties, help distribute survey materials, and refer new clientele to that office. Representatives of ACBO will meet with OOD staff and representatives from various agencies around the state this spring to further the development of programs we can all benefit from. Several OOD counselors attended our 2014 convention, and we hope to attract even more this year with sessions of value to them.

For several years we put together a one-day seminar for families of blind and visually impaired children. This year we will partner with CISM and other agencies to get information to families and professionals at a one-day seminar on May second. The day will feature presentations on the Unified English Braille code, how parents can best help their children prepare and learn, and hands-on displays of materials and equipment.

We have begun planning our convention for next fall. This one will differ from any we have had before since this will be a joint convention with ACB of Indiana. As always, we will have a variety of educational and personal-growth opportunities. We will present awards to people who work hard for the blind community, and gifted students will receive scholarships. Our friends from Indiana will contribute expertise, bring new vendors, and give us opportunities we have not previously had.

Every year members of ACBO and their families and friends enjoy the winter and summer sports retreats, where they meet and make friends, play games, engage in outdoor activities, and just relax. Some of our chapters have activities to encourage interaction and learn or hone skills. The Columbus chapter, for example, has Saturday Night Out on the first Saturday of each month, an evening to share food and conversation. Cincinnati has the TUKANDO program, encouraging people who like to get out to ride bicycles with their friends. Other groups around the state

hike, work on crafts, and attend movies or plays.

We put together this quarterly newsletter, to share information about events, activities, and people. It's fun to read about those we know and those who are new, learn about products and services, and keep up to date with legislation and advocacy efforts.

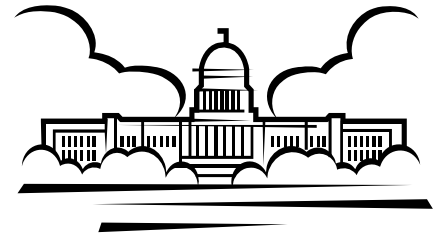
In spite of all of the volunteers who help by driving, partnering bike riders, editing the newsletter, and giving presentations, all of these programs and services cost our organization thousands of dollars to put together and maintain. We need each of you to consider making a tax-deductible donation, by check or with an on-line contribution at [www.acbohio.org](http://www.acbohio.org), to keep us going. You can specify that your \$5 help cover costs of producing and mailing the Connection or that your \$50 support our scholarships. We are including a pre-addressed envelope for your convenience, and I hope you think that at least one of our projects is important enough to receive some support. ACB-Ohio is a strong affiliate; let's keep it that way!

**ACBO Community Shares  
Campaign Codes**

State of Ohio 19003  
City of Columbus 60240  
Franklin County 60240  
Ohio State University 60240  
Columbus State Comm. College 1061

# 2015 Washington Wrap Up

— *By Katie Frederick, Executive Director, ACB-Ohio*



The 2015 Presidents' meeting and Legislative Seminar provided attendees with a wealth of information. Some highlights from the affiliate Presidents' meeting included panel discussions dealing with the acceptance of credit card and online payments, ensuring affiliate information is securely backed up and maintained for the future, an interactive discussion concerning how to brand content and messaging to reach a desired audience, updates on ACB's social media presence, and a lively presentation about audio description.

Monday morning's legislative seminar began with explanations and role plays of the two 2015 imperatives; Eric Bridges, ACB's Director of External Relations and Policy, and Mark Richert, Director of The American Foundation for the Blind's Public Policy Center, presented information in a humorous yet informative manner. Melanie Brunson, ACB's Executive Director, presented information on a third imperative for 2015, U.S. Senate ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty for the Blind. The morning session ended with a presentation by Karen Peltz Strauss, Deputy Chief, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission; she provided an update on video description and the accessibility compliance of emergency alerts.

David Capozzi, Executive Director of the U.S. Access Board, spoke during the luncheon highlighting several initiatives his agency is undertaking, including updating section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and section 255 of the Telecommunications Act, ensuring people with disabilities are able to access technology as it develops. Afternoon presentations included updates from the U.S. Department of Transportation, a humorous presentation on do's and don'ts when meeting with members of Congress and their staff, and updates from National Industries for the Blind.

The two legislative imperatives we discussed with members of the House of Representatives are H.R.729 Medicare Demonstration of Coverage for Low Vision Devices Act of 2015 and reintroduction of the Alice Cogswell Anne Sullivan Macy Act. H.R. 729 was recently reintroduced into Congress, thanks to bipartisan support of Representatives Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) and Gus Viliarakis (R-FL). Key points of H.R. 729 include:

- Individuals would be eligible to participate in the demonstration project only after completing a low-vision exam performed by a physician who would then deem a low-vision device as medically necessary.

- It would allow reimbursement for certain low-vision devices that are the most function-rich, most powerful, and most expensive.
- The legislation would evaluate, through a five-year national demonstration project administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, the fiscal impact of a permanent change to the Social Security Act. To read more about this imperative visit: <http://acb.org/LILVdevice>.

The second imperative, reintroduction of the Alice Cogswell Anne Sullivan Macy Act, seeks to improve the delivery of special education services to students who are blind, visually impaired, deaf-blind, deaf/hard of hearing, and who have other disabilities. Approximately 150 organizations have come together to help champion this landmark special education reforming legislation! To read more about this imperative visit: <http://acb.org/LICogswellMacy>.

When visiting Ohio's senators this year, we discussed a third imperative, the need for ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Currently in the United States, people who are blind or visually impaired have access to approximately five percent of published books and magazines in an accessible format. The purpose of the Marrakesh Treaty is to allow for the sharing of works between countries, thus allowing more accessible books and magazines to be produced and shared. For more information about this treaty visit: <http://>

[acb.org/LIMarrakesh](http://acb.org/LIMarrakesh).

A few members of ACB-Ohio braved mother nature and made visits to Capitol Hill this year, but a one-time visit does not mean our work is done! I strongly encourage each of you to contact your congressperson and let them know your thoughts on these issues; the more they hear about their impact on constituents, the more likely our legislative imperatives are to be acted upon in this current session. Contact information for members of the House may be found at [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) or by calling (202) 224-3121. Senate contact information may be found at [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) or by calling (202) 224-3121. I hope you will join me and advocate for these important issues.



*ACBO Board member Tom Dimit taking a break from working the halls of Congress*

# ACB-Ohio's Honor Roll

## — *By Lori Woodall*

Each year ACB-Ohio hopes to give seven awards at our state convention. We need you to provide nominations. Do you know someone who fits any of the following descriptions? Send your recommendations by September 15, 2015. It's not too early to submit those nominations!

The **KEN MORLOCK AWARD** goes to a person who is blind or visually impaired who has worked tirelessly and selflessly for the blind or visually impaired citizens of Ohio. Ken Morlock served in various capacities for our state affiliate for more than 15 years, serving as a role model for others. Past recipients include 1<sup>st</sup> vice-president Jill Noble.

The **RUTH DAVIDSON AWARD** honors a woman who worked hard to enhance the lives of those who are blind or visually impaired. Recipients of this award include Sue Wesley of Cincinnati.

We present the **ARLENE COHEN ART OF TEACHING AWARD** to a blind or visually impaired teacher or to a sighted teacher who has taught blind or visually impaired students. This award commemorates a past president of the affiliate who taught for many years and considered ACB very important. Sandy Foersterling, Cincinnati, and James Duffield, Pickerington, have received this award.

The **AMBASSADOR AWARD** is given to an ACB-Ohio member who has worked tirelessly for ACB-Ohio and the blind community. Nolan Crabb and Vicky Prahin are recent recipients.

The **MEDIA AWARD** is given to a person who has written or reported about blindness or issues that concern blind or visually impaired persons. All nominations for the Media Award must be accompanied by the article, video, or other presentation. We have presented this award to Deborah Kendrick, Cincinnati, among others.

The **EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD** is given to an Ohio employer who has hired and made accommodations for employees who are blind or visually impaired. We honored the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center with this award in 2011.

The **COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD** is presented to a city, town, or organization for outstanding efforts put forth to enhance the lives of blind or visually impaired people. Past recipients include the Ohio Lions Foundation and the city of Columbus.

Tell us who should join the honor roll this year. Send your nominations to Lori Woodall at [reso6mv@frontier.com](mailto:reso6mv@frontier.com) or call 513-876-3351.

# 2015 Scholarship News

## — *By Jenna McCartney*

The American Council of the Blind of Ohio is pleased to announce that we are offering several scholarships in 2015. We have always offered five scholarships to graduate and undergraduate students in a variety of fields of study, but this year we are adding a new scholarship specifically for incoming college freshmen.

Called the FRIENDS OF FRESHMAN SCHOLARSHIP, it will be a \$1,000 award offered to, as the name suggests, an incoming college freshman in any field of study. As long as you are legally blind and an incoming freshman, you qualify for this scholarship, so take advantage!

The \$2,000 MAX EDELMAN SCHOLARSHIP and the \$2,000 DAVID NEUMEYER SCHOLARSHIP are both offered to legally blind undergraduate students in any field. Any legally blind undergrad can apply, and it doesn't matter whether you want to be a business owner, a doctor, or a preschool teacher.

Don't worry. We have scholarships for graduate students as well - we have two of them. The \$2,500 JOANN FISCHER SCHOLARSHIP is offered to a legally blind *graduate* student in any field of study. Also at \$2,500 the LINWOOD WALKER SCHOLARSHIP will be awarded to a legally blind graduate student in a service-related field. This

includes teaching, health, and public administration.

For those of you going into a blindness-related field such as special education, rehabilitation, teaching or counseling, orientation and mobility, or concentrating in programs serving persons who are blind or visually impaired, the NOLA WEBB-MCKINNEY SCHOLARSHIP, at \$2,000, is for you.

To apply for these scholarships and to get qualification information, go to [acbo.org](http://acbo.org). Information can also be requested by calling the ACBO office at 800-835-2226.

**Theresa Carroll**  
**Editor**

**Michelle Spillan**  
**Editorial Assistant**

Thanks to the contributors: **Theresa Carroll, Katie Frederick, Jenna McCartney, Jill Noble, Vicky Prahin, Elizabeth Sammons and Lori Woodall**. Send items for the next issue to Theresa Carroll ([acbo.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:acbo.newsletter@gmail.com)) by May 15.



# Recreation Roundup

— *By Jill Noble, Chair of the Recreation Committee*

The lack of snow does not constitute the lack of fun. Over the last 26 years the winter sports retreat weekend has taken place at Punderson State Park in Newbury, Ohio. In 2015, instead of breaking tradition and canceling the yearly event because Punderson was closed due to construction, the recreation committee decided to try another state park.

Maumee Bay Lodge was recommended because it had the highest probability of having enough snow for skiing and other winter sports. Unfortunately, Mother Nature didn't turn on the snow machines until after the WSR weekend.



*Lynn Powers gets in on the fun with another snake*

However, that didn't keep the skiers and volunteer guides from having a good time.

In addition to lots of winter hikes and visits to the nature center, we enjoyed playing cards and board games, shopping and catching up with old friends and making new ones. Plans are in the works to have the winter weekend back at Punderson in 2016, but several people have expressed an interest in going back to Maumee Bay Lodge in the future.

Believe it or not, summer will be here sooner than you think. Look for information about the summer sports retreat in the next issue of the Ohio Connection.



*Rachel Zeiter and Alex Densmore holding a snake at the Maumee Bay nature center*



## Bits & Bytes

### Excerpted from "Ability Front"

by Elizabeth Sammons

This website gives all alternate forms of transportation in Ohio, broken down by county.

<http://www.apta.com/resources/links/unitedstates/Pages/OhioTransitLinks.aspx#a6>

The American Council of the Blind "Braille Forum" and "ACB Reports" podcasts are available in the iTunes store. Search for "Braille Forum" in the iTunes store; you will see the RSS feed appear, then you can subscribe to it. Search for "ACB Reports" and that feed will appear as well.

What are maps that you can both hear and touch, and what is "the handshake of a building?". Learn more in this article.

<http://www.citylab.com/design/2015/01/making-better-maps-for-the-blind/384495/>

"ADA Live!" is a free monthly show broadcast nationally on the Internet by the Southeast ADA Center. "ADA Live!" focuses on rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and airs from 1:00 p.m. -1:30 p.m. (Eastern) on the first Wednesday of each month. ADA Live! Episode 17: ADA Legacy Tour -- Coming Soon to a City near You <<http://adalive.org/>>



## Caremark Offers Talking Prescription Labels, Braille, Large Print

Congratulations CVS Health! Today the largest integrated pharmacy company in the United States announced that it is now providing talking, braille and large print prescription labels through its mail service company (Caremark) to blind and visually impaired members.

Caremark is offering the accessible labels through Envision America's ScripAbility system. Members can order the new labels by calling their Caremark call center number. Caremark's general Customer Care toll-free number is 1-800-552-8159. Envision America can be reached at 800-890-1180.

In developing its accessible prescription label program CVS Health engaged in structured negotiations with the American Council of the Blind and several blind Caremark members. The Law Office of Lainey Feingold and Linda Dardarian of the Oakland civil rights firm of Goldstein, Borgen, Dardarian & Ho worked on the initiative with the Claimants and CVS Health.



# American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) Scholarship Program 2015

Date Posted: 02/09/2015

AFB administers six post-secondary education scholarships for up to eleven deserving students who are legally blind. The following is a list of scholarships offered:

## **Delta Gamma Memorial Scholarship**

- One scholarship of \$1,000
- Undergraduate or graduate studying in the field of rehabilitation and/or education of persons who are blind or visually impaired

## **Gladys C. Anderson Memorial Scholarship**

- One scholarship of \$1,000
- Undergraduate or graduate studying in the field of classical or religious music
- Applicant must be female

## **Karen D. Carsel Memorial Scholarship**

- One scholarship of \$500
- Graduate studying in any full-time program in any field
- 

## **Paul W. Ruckes Scholarship**

- Two scholarships of \$2,000 each
- Undergraduate or graduate studying in field of engineering or in computer, physical, or life sciences

## **R. L. Gillette Scholarship**

- Two scholarships of \$1,000 each
- Undergraduate studying in the field of literature or music
- Applicant must be female

## **Rudolph Dillman Memorial Scholarship**

- Four scholarships of \$2,500 each
- Undergraduate or graduate studying in the field of rehabilitation and/or education of persons who are blind or visually impaired

Visit [www.afb.org/scholarships.asp](http://www.afb.org/scholarships.asp) for further information and to fill out the application form.

Contact: Tara Annis

Phone: (800) 232-5152

Email: [tannis@afb.net](mailto:tannis@afb.net)

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 May 15, 2015. Please include your name, address, and phone number and send to: Theresa Carroll at [acbo.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:acbo.newsletter@gmail.com).

# CNN: Comcast Launches a Vocal TV Guide

## By Frank Pallotta

By pressing the "A" button, Comcast's X1 customers will be able to activate the system's new "talking guide."

Comcast has created what it calls a "talking guide" for its cable TV system, designed to help visually impaired customers -- and everyone else -- navigate what's on live TV and on-demand.

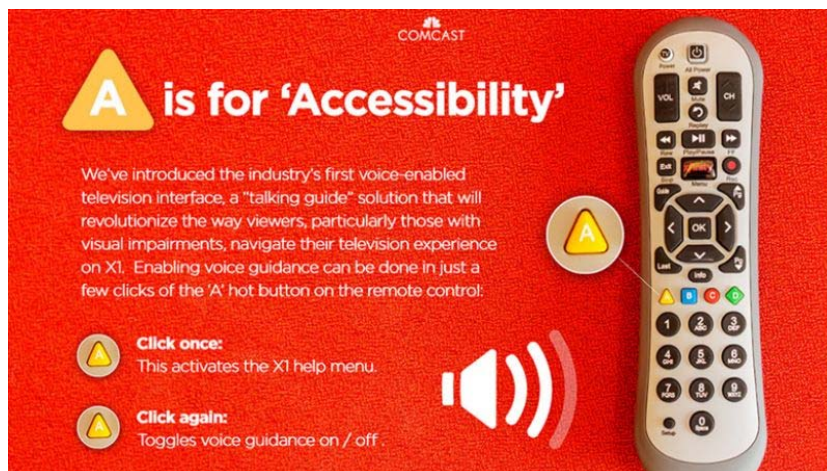
The "talking guide" is an addition to Comcast's X1, a state-of-the-art set-top-box and software package that connects to the Internet. Comcast has been deploying X1 in its local markets across the country.

The company announced the new feature on Wednesday at an event in San Francisco. It will become available to all households that have X1 within a few weeks.

The feature -- which I tested last week in a demonstration -- includes a very realistic female voice that helps users navigate through the X1's guide, settings, and even program descriptions via vocal prompts.

For example, if you select a movie through video-on-demand, the talking guide tells you the film's title, its run time, and even its review score via Rotten Tomatoes.

"Television is universally loved, and we want everyone to be able to enjoy it,"



Comcast CEO Brian Roberts said in a statement. "The talking guide feature will enable all of our customers to experience the X1 platform in a new way, and give our blind and visually impaired customers the freedom to independently explore and navigate thousands of shows and movies."

When Tom Wlodkowski, Comcast's vice president of accessibility (who is blind himself), demonstrated the feature for me, it seemed to work pretty seamlessly and efficiently.

It only took two taps of the remote control's "A" button to activate the feature. It seemed to work much like the closed captioning function on most standard television sets, but instead for the visually impaired.

The feature is just in its beginning phases, Comcast emphasized -- there are plans to give customers the ability to search in the future.



American Council of the Blind  
3805 N. High St., Ste. 305  
Columbus, Ohio 43214

FREE MATTER  
FOR THE BLIND



## ACB-OHIO DATEBOOK

### APRIL 25

ACBO BOARD MEETING  
GARFIELD SUITES HOTEL  
CINCINNATI, OH

### MAY 2

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FAMILY CONFERENCE  
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER OF CENTRAL OHIO  
8:45 A.M.-3:30 P.M., COLUMBUS  
REGISTRATION DEADLINE APRIL 24  
FOR DETAILS CALL (614) 468-8924 OR GO TO  
[CISAM.OSSB.OH.GOV/PROFESSIONAL\\_DEVELOPMENT.PHP](http://CISAM.OSSB.OH.GOV/PROFESSIONAL_DEVELOPMENT.PHP)



### JULY 3-11

ACB ANNUAL CONVENTION  
SHERATON DALLAS HOTEL  
DALLAS, TX