

Summer 2016



Ohio Connection

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

OUR UNFORGETTABLE FRANCE EXPERIENCE

By Katie Frederick with Vicky Prahin

I began studying French in high school and quickly fell in love with the language. I continued to study it in college and decided to make it my minor. Early on I knew I wanted to visit a French-speaking country; it was just a matter of when.

One day in May 2015, Vicky forwarded to me an email from Mind's Eye Travel about a river cruise in France. Mind's Eye Travel is a company owned by Sue Bramhall, a visually impaired woman, who started her company in order to provide tour opportunities for blind and visually impaired travelers. She finds trips and cruises, advertises, and makes arrangements for those who need a sighted guide. We published an article about Mind's Eye Travel and the Viking River Cruise in the fall 2015 issue of the *Ohio Connection*. Vicky and I decided to make the most of our experience and added the three-day, pre-cruise package.

Prior to departing, we had to organize paperwork for ourselves and our guide dogs. Obtaining passports was a speedy process; filling out the forms for the dogs' access took more time, how-



The travel group in front of the Arc de Triomphe in Paris



Katie and Vicky enjoying crepes at a café in Vernon

ever. We needed to obtain USDA certification assuring French Customs that our dogs are certified by a reputable school, that all vaccinations are up to date, and that the dogs have a registered chip. We also made sure to have with us our school ID with picture and date of acquisition.

We flew from Columbus to Dulles and from there to Paris. Our flights were uneventful, and transferring in DC—while an adventure requiring trips in more than ten elevators, a moving walkway, and a train—was okay thanks to the assistance we received. After landing in France, two young people met us and ushered us through a very deserted Charles de Gaulle Airport. We were not even aware of when we passed through Customs. Thanks to our wonderful assistants, collecting our luggage and securing a taxi to our hotel in Paris went without a hitch.

My French-speaking skills were put to the test right away, giving the taxi driver our hotel's address and talking to hotel staff upon our arrival. After checking into our European-sized hotel room (think small and then smaller), we had lunch with a couple who were introduced to us by a mutual friend. After lunch, we took a tour of the Fragonard Perfume Museum then had dinner with our tour group Thursday night.

Friday morning we boarded a 15-passenger van to begin our Paris tour. The day's tour highlights included visits to the Eiffel Tower and Notre Dame of Paris cathedral. It's amazing to walk on marble floors worn by thousands of feet over hundreds of years! Saturday provided more sightseeing in Paris, ending with the Arc De Triomphe.

Sunday we boarded the *Viking River Rolf* to begin the cruise. We spent part of the day learning the layout of the ship—simple and practical, nice right angles. Monday we walked through Marais, the Jewish quarter, a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood; most streets are closed to cars and trucks. After lunch at a typical café, our Program Director treated us to a sampling of éclairs. As we slept Monday night, the ship sailed to the town of Vernon. I had no clue the ship was moving, gliding

through the water with barely a bounce.

Tuesday morning we drove from Vernon to Giverny and toured the gardens and house of Claude Monet. In the afternoon, a walking tour around the charming town of Vernon, population 25,000, provided an opportunity to experience small town French life and culture. After the guided tour, we explored on our own. Vicky and I, along with Staszek our sighted guide, walked around a church whose construction started in the 1100s and took 600 years to complete due to various wars. The buildings in Vernon are a mix of old and modern because of destruction during World War II. We stopped at a little cafe to indulge in a real French treat: crepes. One simply cannot spend time in France without crepes.

Wednesday morning was a leisurely sail along the Seine to Rouen, the city where Joan of Arc stood trial and was



The travel group in front of the Notre Dame Cathedral

burned at the stake. During the afternoon we strolled the cobbled streets of the city. I recall thinking as I walked along, “I wonder who walked these same paths centuries before?”

Thursday we took a two-hour bus ride to the beaches of Normandy. In addition to visiting Omaha Beach and the American Military Cemetery, we watched a brief film about the construction of the man-made harbor for the Battle of D-Day. It's incredible to think about the engineering challenges and accomplishments that made the D-Day landing possible. The American Cemetery contains 9,387 graves, four of which are women: three postal work-

ers and a nurse. A wall containing the names of 1,557 missing unknown soldiers is located in the visitors' center. A brief ceremony on the grounds honored the soldiers who gave their lives in France more than 70 years ago. There are few experiences in my life where seeing isn't necessary to fully appreciate them; visiting the American Cemetery was one such experience. As we walked past rows and rows of graves, birds sang and we could hear the sea in the distance. It's a truly peaceful resting place for those who so valiantly gave their lives for our country during World War II.

Friday morning we cruised to the village of Les Andelys. The afternoon travels took us on a walking tour of this small French river town, where some of our group shopped, and some of us visited another old church.

My first trip to France was an unforgettable experience; visiting sites, hearing sounds, and learning about cultures of northern France are memories I'll keep with me for a lifetime. My French came back to me as I used it on the ship, in shops, and on the street. The meals I enjoyed were out of this world. If only I could cook such flavorful dishes as the chef onboard!



A D-Day museum at Normandy. The mural on the side of the building reads, "The true heroes will never be forgotten."

A PEEK AT THE 2016 ACBO CONFERENCE

By Theresa Carroll & Vicky Prahin

The site committee is proud to announce that the 2016 ACBO Annual Conference & Convention will be held at the beautiful Kalahari Resort in Sandusky, Ohio. Bring the whole family for some fun at the amazing indoor waterpark, one of the largest in North America. There is even a swim-up bar for adults only. Feed animals at the petting zoo, try your hand at some of the world's best video games, or dare to try the outdoor zipline! There's so much to do you may be tempted to skip the convention.

Make your reservations today by calling 877-525-2427 and using code 25538 for the ACBO convention dates of October 21-23, 2016. Reservations cannot be made online. Room rates are \$109 per night plus applicable taxes (a fraction of the usual cost) and include four wristbands to the water park. There are five fantastic dining options right off of the lobby, plus a coffee shop, a French pastry shop, an ice



Hand feeding the giraffes is one of many exciting activities at the resort.

cream shop, a candy shop, clothing stores, souvenir shops, and the most incredible candy apples you could ever eat! For those who want to be pampered, there is a full ser-

vice salon and day spa. For the gamers, there is even a video arcade and so much more.

ACBO's rooms will be grouped in one wing of the hotel, making it easier to navigate. Each comes equipped with a microwave and mini fridge, a small patio and some even have a fireplace. The attached convention center has plenty of space for everything from our small sessions to our banquet and exhibits. Check it out at their website www.kalahariresorts.com/ohio.

Our program is starting to come together. We will have sessions on technology for those with smartphones and other devices and non-technology workshops for those who are not interested

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ACBO AWARDS

A banquet highlight of our annual state conference and convention is handing awards to deserving individuals and organizations; recognizing the efforts to improve life for people who are blind or visually impaired. It's hard to give awards without nominations! We need your help. Please think about each of the following awards and nominate someone for each one of them. It's not too early to start thinking about the state conference and convention in October.

The **KEN MORLOCK AWARD** is given 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, setting an example for others. Past recipients include Don Kalman.

The **RUTH DAVIDSON AWARD** is given to a sighted person who has worked to enhance the lives of persons who are blind or visually impaired. Ruth joined ACBO soon after its inception and helped for many years, driving, advocating, and filling in wherever possible. Those who have received this award include Steve Nemeth.

The **ARLENE COHEN ART OF TEACHING AWARD** is given 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. Rachel Smith won this award last year.

The **AMBASSADOR AWARD** is given to an ACB-Ohio member who has worked tirelessly for ACB-Ohio and the blind community. Scott Wallace won this award in 2015.

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 The Newsreel in 2015.

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. Past winners include the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center and Scott Lissner, ADA Coordinator for The Ohio State University.

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.

The deadline for award nominations is September 7, 2016. Letters of nomination may be mailed to ACB-Ohio, 3805 North High St., Suite 305, Columbus, Ohio 43214 or sent via email to acbo.awards@gmail.com.

If you need help with your submission or have questions, please contact Lori Woodall, awards committee chair, phone (513) 876-3351 or email her at reso6mv@frontier.com. The Awards Committee looks forward to receiving your nominations!

ACBO SCHOLARSHIPS

The American Council of the Blind of Ohio offers six scholarships each academic year. The application and reference forms may be downloaded from www.acbohio.org or requested by calling our office at 614-221-6688 or 800-835-2226. Recipients must be attending Ohio schools or be Ohio residents.

The **FRIENDS OF FRESHMEN SCHOLARSHIP** is a new award, presented to a blind or visually impaired Ohio student beginning his or her freshman year in any field of study.

The **MAX EDELMAN SCHOLARSHIP** and the **DAVID NEWMAYER SCHOLARSHIP** are offered to blind or visually impaired undergraduate students in any field of study.

The **JOANN FISCHER SCHOLARSHIP** is awarded to a blind or visually impaired graduate student in any field of study.

Our **LINWOOD WALKER SCHOLARSHIP** goes to a blind or visually impaired graduate student in a service-related field, such as teaching, health, public administration, or counseling.

Any college student at any level who is pursuing a degree in a blindness-related area or concentrating in programs serving persons who are blind or visually impaired can apply for the **NO-LA WEBB-MCKINNEY SCHOLARSHIP**.

For more information or to download the necessary documents, see our website or call the office for a print copy.

FOR LEADERS AND ASPIRING LEADERS

By Jim Jirak

Smack in the middle of our great nation
Is a state that requires some explanation.
To east and west coasters who'll come right out and ask ya
"Is there anything of interest in the state of Nebraska?"

It's true we don't have mountains all decked out in snow,
But we do have the world's biggest live chicken show.
We're the makers of Spam. We invented Kool-Aid,
And this is where the first Reuben sandwich was made.

Our insect, the honeybee. our bird, the meadowlark.
The strobe light, our creation, works best in the dark.
Governmentally speaking, we're a freak of nature,
Since we have the only one-house legislature.

On Arbor Day, when you plant a tree,
Remember that it started in Nebraska City.
We were once called a desert, but that name didn't take,
Since we have the country's largest underground lake.

We have the world's largest forest planted by hand,
And more miles of rivers than any state in the land.
The College World Series calls Omaha "home",
And yes, this is where the buffalo used to roam.

We were the first state in the nation to finish our interstate section,
And the first to run two women in a gubernatorial election.
We invented 9-1-1 emergency communication,
And we're the number one producer of center pivot irrigation.

Our woolly mammoth fossil is the largest ever found,
And our monumental "Carhenge" is certain to astound.
We have several museums that could be called odd,
Dedicated to Chevys, fur trading, roller skates and sod.
In Blue Hill, Nebraska, no woman wearing a hat,
Can eat onions in public. Imagine that!

We built the largest porch swing and indoor rain forest,
And anyone who visits is sure to adore us.
So pack up the kiddies, the pets and the wife,
And see why Nebraska is called "THE GOOD LIFE."

(Oh gosh – I didn't even once mention football? OR that the yellow color of the school buses originated in Franklin, Nebraska.)

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Midwest Leadership Conference is postponed until August 2017. More information will be included in future issues.

It is the backdrop of St. Louis's Gateway Arch that saw the culmination of the collaborative efforts of several Midwestern states to launch the initial Midwest Leadership Training Conference in August 2011. Dubbed the ABC's of ACB Leadership, each agenda item worked around this theme and provided a cohesive and meaningful conference experience.

Building on the momentum of that conference, two previously held national leadership training conferences and the 2014 Midwest Leadership Conference again in St. Louis, several individuals from the states of Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Wisconsin have gotten together to plan another Midwest Leadership Conference this summer. The host hotel is the Regency Lodge in Omaha, Nebraska, 909 S 107 Ave. Room reservations are now available and can be made online at <http://bookings.ihotelier.com/bookings.jsp?>

[groupID=1611410&hotelID=75099](http://bookings.ihotelier.com/bookings.jsp?groupID=1611410&hotelID=75099) or by calling 1-800-617-8310. The conference dates are August 5-7 and the group rate is \$81 plus tax.

This time, we are reaching beyond the Midwest to invite not only those affiliated with ACB and CCLVI (Council of Citizens with Low Vision International), but also anyone who could benefit. Please begin thinking about who would benefit most from a program such as this. Guidelines for consideration include, but are not limited to, having a scholarship winner who has expressed genuine interest in and follow-through with projects. Perhaps you, or your board members, are new and could learn from experienced leaders. In an attempt to reach younger participants, the planning committee has teamed up with ACB Board Member Sara Conrad who will facilitate a Young Professionals Seminar. The purpose of this portion of the seminar is to encour-

age leadership of young professionals in the blindness community and in their personal communities, as well as to facilitate effective leadership across ACB. Young professionals are often uncomfortable with programming that is not specific to their age level. By providing this seminar in conjunction with the Midwest Leadership Conference, young professionals will have the ability to strategize and grow with their peers and to engage with leaders of varying ages.

The festivities begin Friday, August 5, with an icebreaker. Some of the topics under discussion for Saturday, August 6, include:

- Documents for a Successful Affiliate: Best Practices for Creating & Maintaining a Constitution, Bylaws, and More
- Becoming a Non-profit: Obtaining 501 (c)(3) Status for Your Affiliate
- Inclusion of Special Populations: Incorporating Minority Interests

- Dollars & Sense: Effective Fund-raising
- Power in Numbers: Increasing Membership, and
- The Age Gap: How to be a Leader in a Diverse Age Group.

We will top off the day with a banquet with a high-profile leader from the past. We will conclude Sunday, August 7, with a mock election.

If you're looking for a singularly effective means of increasing affiliate membership, training tomorrow's leaders, improving the ability of current leaders and creating a vibrant, active and empowered state or special interest affiliate, look no further than the Midwest Leadership Conference and the Young Professionals Seminar. If you have further questions or need more information about the conference in general, please contact me at jjirak@inebraska.com or by calling 402-679-8448.

| ACBO Community Shares Campaign Codes | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| State of Ohio 19003 | Ohio State University 60240 |
| City of Columbus 60240 | Columbus State 1061 |
| Franklin County 60240 | |

MY JOURNEY TOWARD WINNING FRIENDS AND INFLUENCING OTHERS

By Kelsey Nicolay

As a college graduate with a degree in communication, I thought I was prepared for the workplace. Over a year out and still unemployed, I decided to listen to the encouragement of my cousin, a training consultant for Dale Carnegie, to go through their program. He told me that, even though I had solid communication skills, I would still benefit from the course. It was a difficult decision, partly because I would have to depend on my family to transport me. After much thought, my dad and I decided that I should go through the program since I would acquire skills to prepare me to handle the stress and challenges of the workplace. In addition, the course served as an opportunity to network with the other participants in order to help me gain employment.

Prior to the talk with my cousin, I did not know much about the program. I knew that it had something to do with public speaking. From the beginning, the staff felt they would be comfortable having me in class. "I can handle it," said Elaine Dwyer, a Dale Carnegie instructor, when informed by my cousin that I would be enrolling in her course. Due to company policy, I was not given the name of my instructor, so I was not able

to communicate with her ahead of time. The training consultant had to facilitate the entire enrollment process, including the initial discussion with the trainer. I felt more confident knowing my instructor would be able to accommodate my learning needs.

The first class was an orientation where participants were introduced to the Dale Carnegie program. Students learned basic skills such as self-introduction techniques. Each student was then asked to practice these skills in front of the class. My classmates were willing to help me move around when needed.

During the first few classes, the students practiced fundamental communication skills such as name recognition and conversation starting. The majority of this instruction was oral; all participants were expected to memorize the sequences or sayings without having them written down; however, at times a participant manual was used. I was able to obtain an electronic copy which I could pull up in class as needed. I was able to locate the other books on Bookshare, so I could read them independently between classes. At times

when materials were not available electronically, I asked a family member to serve as a reader.

As the course progressed, there were some challenging aspects. During one class, the instructor made up actions to go with a story in the book with which the students were asked to become familiar. The purpose of adding the actions was to help students add enthusiasm to their

communication. Neither I nor the instructor considered how I would participate.

She asked one of the graduate assistants to

try to describe what she was doing, but the graduate assistant could not describe the actions fast enough. Once the class learned the story with the actions, the students were asked to perform it in small groups. I did not do the actions. Instead, I was able to participate by helping to recite the words. "I realized I should have followed up with you," Ms. Dwyer said after class that night. From this experience, we learned that it is important to anticipate challenges and plan accordingly.

During a later class, the students were asked to learn several silly skits to

demonstrate being flexible with change. This time, the instructor and I talked about the best way to handle the situation. We both agreed that having me work with another person would be the best way for me to participate fully. The person I worked with verbally described what the instructor was doing while she was demonstrating the skit to the class. When the class was learning the skit, my partner would physically guide me

through the routine. Once again, the class performed the skit in small groups. My partner helped me perform my assigned skit with my group. I felt

more comfortable with this method since I could feel the motions.

As part of the course, each participant was required to give a weekly talk. The talks focused on gaining cooperation with others, demonstrating leadership, and enhancing relationships. During my speeches, I focused on dealing with the vocational rehabilitation agency and how I applied the principles learned in class to help me get the services I need. My classmates were not familiar with the system, but after listening to my talks they had a better understanding of some of the difficulties I face.

DURING MY SPEECHES, I FOCUSED ON DEALING WITH THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCY AND HOW I APPLIED THE PRINCIPLES LEARNED IN CLASS TO HELP ME GET THE SERVICES I NEED.

Although I had difficulties in some areas, I was much more comfortable in others, particularly learning things by rote. For example, during one class period, the instructor wrote a saying on the board. I asked my neighbor what she was writing and she quietly whispered it to me. The instructor went through the saying out loud, but having my neighbor whisper it to me ahead of time helped to solidify it in my memory, making it easier to repeat the saying individually when students were asked to do so later in the class.

Before I knew it, it was graduation. Each student was required to give a final talk in order to receive his or her certificate. Prior to each speech, the instructor talked briefly about each participant, mentioning a highlight from his or her talk. I was a little nervous at first, but when it was my turn I stood up and confidently gave my speech. When I finished speaking, my family came up to present me with my certificate as the other participants' families had done. In the end, my family and I decided that the process was worth it, even though they had to drive me there and back every week. My advice to readers is that if a Dale Carnegie class is offered in your area, do not hesitate to participate. The skills you learn will help you in every aspect of life.

ACBO FUNDRAISER

DINING IN THE DARK

Join us for an inaugural dinner parade September 15th, 2016 in the Village on Adams in Toledo! This fun night of progressive-style dining will highlight various venues on Adams Street (Toledo's creative corridor). Each venue will present a separate course to be enjoyed while your own sense of sight is reduced. We will progress from venue to venue during this fun and interactive evening.

Please wear comfortable shoes and experience an evening of heightened senses as you enjoy cuisine from some of Toledo's most creative chefs while blindfolded! Tickets are \$65 in advance and can be purchased by calling 419-699-9204. Proceeds from the evening benefit the American Council of the Blind of Ohio.



(CONFERENCE, Continued from page 5)

in the intricacies of hardware and software. We are honored to have Dr. Anthony Easley of the Cleveland Sight Center as our keynote speaker, will hear about what is happening at OOD and on BARD, and have the pleasure of hosting John Polk from APH as our banquet speaker.

We are looking for sponsors—any company or individual who would like to support this annual event. Let us know of anyone you think would like such recognition. We will have many of our popular vendors, and new ones will join in the fun this year. If you know of someone who would like a table, have that person contact our office at 800-835-2226 or acbo.director@gmail.com.

More information will be in the next edition of the *Ohio Connection*, along with registration information. See you in October!

BITS & BYTES



The USA is one of the last countries to use inaccessible paper currency, and

was forced by the courts to change. Starting with the \$10 in 2020, bills will feature raised tactile and enlarged numerals. Several designs were tested during various user studies at conventions and conferences over the past few years. Additional details can be found in this Time Magazine article: <http://www.blindbargains.com/redirect.php?r=15194>

In April, the Disabled Parenting Project launched its website: <http://www.disabledparenting.com/#genesis-nav-primary>. DPP is an online, interactive community for sharing experiences, advice and conversations among disabled parents, as well as those considering parenthood. While there are other websites that address certain aspects of parenting with a disability, the DPP is the first and only online community to be developed by and for the entire cross-disability parenting community.

The National Council on Disability (NCD) and the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation released “[Parenting with a Disability: Know Your Rights Toolkit](#)” to advance the understanding and promote the rights of people with disabilities and their children. Currently, 35 states include disability as grounds for termination of parental rights. This

toolkit provides a comprehensive review of the barriers people with diverse disabilities experience when exercising their fundamental right to create and maintain families, as well as persistent, systemic, and pervasive discrimination against parents with disabilities. It also analyzes how U.S. disability law and policy apply to parents with disabilities in the child welfare and family law systems, and strategies parents with disabilities can use to overcome them.

<http://www.ncd.gov/publications/2012/Sep272012>

Career Advantage for VIPs: An Employment Preparation Primer for Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired is designed for individuals making the transition from high school, college, or training program into the workforce. The self-paced modules take users step-by-step through self-assessment, career exploration, developing resumes, learning effective job-

search techniques, and talking to employers about vision loss and accommodations.

<http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=93195286&msgid=826264&act=1OQJ&c=654309&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fblind.msstate.edu%2Four-products%2Fonline-employment-preparation%2F>

This website created by OSU's assistive technology team features a plethora of great practices. Examples: American standards for disability compliance (legal information), information on Media Accessibility, (how to caption content, describing graphics, creating accessible PDFs and WORD documents, HTML5 and web design best practices with accessibility and eBook production advice) and Assistive Technology (demos and information on text to speech, speech to text, and much more. <http://go.osu.edu/act-wiki>.

Michelle Spillan, Editor

As always, thanks to the contributors: **Theresa Carroll, Katie Frederick, Jim Jirak, Kelsey Nicolay, Ann Pimley, Vicky Prahin and Elizabeth Sammons.** 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, and include your name, address and phone number. Please send items for the next issue to acbo.newsletter@gmail.com by **August 15.**



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FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND



ACB-OHIO DATEBOOK

JULY 1-9

ACB NATIONAL CONVENTION
HYATT REGENCY, MINNEAPOLIS, MN

AUGUST 1

ACB-OHIO SCHOLARSHIP
APPLICATIONS DUE

AUGUST 5-7

ACB-OHIO SUMMER SPORTS RETREAT
HOCKINGPORT, OHIO

AUGUST 15

OHIO CONNECTION NEWSLETTER
SUBMISSION DEADLINE

SEPTEMBER 7

ACB-OHIO AWARD NOMINATIONS DUE

SEPTEMBER 15

DINING IN THE DARK
ACB-OHIO FUNDRAISER
TOLEDO, OHIO

OCTOBER 21-23

ACB-OHIO CONFERENCE
& CONVENTION
KALAHARI RESORT, SANDUSKY, OHIO

