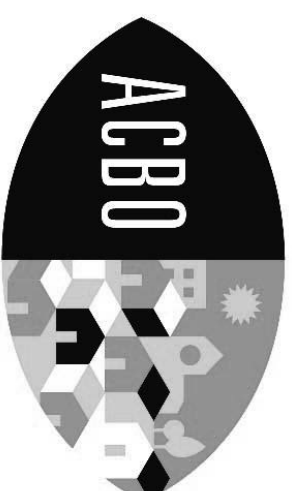




American Council of the Blind of Ohio
3805 N. High St., Suite 305
Columbus, Ohio 43214

FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND



Spring 2017
Ohio Connection

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

OHIO HAPPENINGS

By Katie Frederick



ACB-OHIO DATEBOOK

APRIL 7

ACB-OHIO BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING
VIA CONFERENCE CALL

MAY 12

GREATER CINCINNATI CHAPTER
RAFFLE, GEORGETOWN, OHIO
FOR INFO CALL 513-876-3351

MAY 15

OHIO CONNECTION DEADLINE

JUNE 30-JULY 7

ACB NATIONAL CONVENTION
NUGGET CASINO RESORT
SPARKS, NEVADA

JULY 21-23

ACBO SUMMER SPORTS RETREAT
HOCKINGPORT, OHIO

AUGUST 4-6

MIDWEST LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
OMAHA, NEBRASKA

OCTOBER 20-22

ACB-INDIANA/OHIO JOINT
CONFERENCE & CONVENTION
KALAHARI RESORT, SANDUSKY, OHIO



Advocacy seems to be the theme of 2017. The 132nd Ohio General Assembly began the year looking at the next state budget, and the American Council of the Blind of Ohio is monitoring the process and participating in conversations and hearings related to transportation. Ohio's transportation budget is separate from the general budget; however, this does not mean funding for transportation cannot occur in the general funding portion.

In October, ACB-Ohio participated in a transportation summit, bringing together providers of transportation and consumer/advocacy organizations around the state. Following the day-long conference, a smaller group met and discussed a strategy for approaching Ohio's General Assembly to ask for an increase in public transportation funding. In December, the Ohioans for Transportation Equity Coalition sent a letter to Governor Kasich, the director of the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), and key House and Senate members who serve on transportation committees. The American Council of the Blind of Ohio added its signature

to this letter, joining approximately 50 organizations around the state who believe an investment increase in Ohio's transportation system is sorely needed. In brief, the coalition asks that the paltry 1% of funding currently allocated for public transportation, ranking Ohio 47th of 50, be increased to 10 percent. At the time of this writing the transportation budget is working its way through the House and will soon move to the Senate for consideration.

The new General Assembly term and budget process have allowed me to learn more about and understand the importance of advocacy at all levels of government. If you agree an increase in transportation funding is necessary, you can help. Members of the General Assembly are in their Columbus offices Tuesday through Thursday; Mondays and Fridays they are back in their districts, likely a community where you live. If you are unsure who your Ohio representative and senator are, go to our home page to find them; click on the "[Locate your Ohio senators and representatives by zip code](#)" link. You can also call the Ohio Legislative hotline at (800) 282-0253 and speak to your senator and representative via phone. The transportation budget is scheduled to be finalized by March 31, and the general budget will take effect

July 1. Living and working in Columbus provides me the opportunity to testify and meet with legislators here, but you can make a difference in your community, too!

I hope this article has given you a chance to learn more about some of the statewide work ACB-Ohio is undertaking. Remember, we are a statewide organization comprised of many members and several local chapters. We want to share Ohio information with you, but we know many members and chapters are taking part in interesting activities and efforts. Please share this information for publication in the *Ohio Connection* so members and friends of ACB-Ohio can learn more about how you are making life better for Ohioans who are blind or visually impaired. The next newsletter deadline is May 15. Let us hear from you!

Michelle Spillan, Editor
Newsletter Committee: Katie Frederick,
Irwin Hott, Jenna McCartney, Vicky Prahin

As always, thanks to the contributors: **AFB, Reggie Anglen, Katie Frederick, Vicky Prahin, Elizabeth Sammons, and Lori Woodall.**

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 **May 15**.

ferent U.S. states. The website also provides information and links for schools and summer camps for the blind and other educational resources, plus organizations for blind sports. www.naturefortheblind.com

If you know of any additional Braille trails or sensory gardens not listed on the website, or if you have other outdoor or educational resources to share, please email evan.barnard@nature4all.org.

NFB SCHOLARSHIPS

Due March 31: National Federation of the Blind (NFB) offers blind U.S. college students scholarships worth from \$3,000 to \$12,000. All scholarships are based on academic excellence, community service, and leadership. Details here: <https://nfb.org/scholarships>.

AFB SCHOLARSHIPS

Due April 1: Scholarships of \$2,000-\$3,500 from American Foundation for the Blind; various fields/requirements detailed here: <https://www.afb.org/info/afb-2017-scholarship-application/5#content>

STUDENT VIDEO CONTEST

Due April 17: National Center for College Students with Disabilities seeking student videos and YouTube for posting. Top winners will be awarded cash prizes. We're especially interested in examples of what works for students, classrooms, or access. Details at <http://www.nccsdonline.org/video-competition.html>

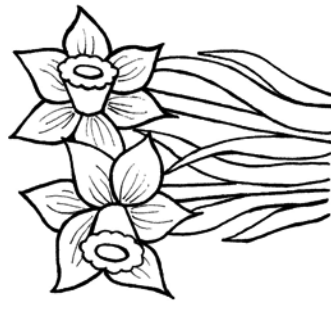
NFB STEM SLAM FOR STUDENTS
National Federation of the Blind announces the 2017 NFB Youth Slam, a weeklong learning opportunity for students grades 9 through 12 in a wide variety of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) disciplines. One hundred blind and low vision students from across the country will be selected to attend this weeklong adventure at Towson University (Maryland) next July 23 to 29. Applications due May 7. For more information and to learn about volunteer opportunities, see: <http://blindscience.org/nfb-youth-slam>

For additional questions, call (410) 659-9314, extension 2418, or email STEM@nfb.org

TACTILE BOOK COMPETITION

Entries Due August 10, 2017: The International Tactile-Illustrated Book Prize, a competition to encourage quality and quantity of tactile books for children with visual impairments. Visit this link for rules and entry forms and to see last year's winners

www.aph.org/tactus-international-tactile-books-competition/ Submit your tactile book appropriate for children age 3 to 12 to the American Printing House for the Blind. Questions? Contact Rob Guillen, rguillen@aph.org



ACCESS VETERAN BENEFITS

The Veterans Administration offers an easy referral form if you know of a blind or visually impaired veteran (not necessarily service related) in need of assistance. Just email for a Field Service Officer to contact. <mailto:bva@bva.org?subject=Blind%20Veteran%20in%20Need%20of%20Help>

CHECK ON SOCIAL SECURITY

CLAIMS AND APPEALS

Social Security has launched a new service for my Social Security account holders. Now the public can check on the status of an application for benefits or an appeal. The service will provide detailed information about retirement, disability, survivors, Medicare, and Supplemental Security Income claims and appeals, whether these are filed online at socialsecurity.gov <<https://www.ssa.gov/>> or in any field office in person. Details here: <http://blog.socialsecurity.gov/coming-soon-improved-check-your-application-or-appeal-status-service/>

IMPROVE YOUR TECH SKILLS

The American Foundation for the Blind recently launched Learn Tech, an access initiative that features free online tutorials to help people who are blind or visually impaired improve computer and technology skills. New tutorials are on Google Docs and Google Drive. www.afb.org/learntech

ACCESSIBLE ABSTRACT ART

This exhibit held Feb. 18-May 23 at the Massillon Museum will feature ten abstract paintings from the collection, each translated by community members who are blind into sonic iPad

touch-screen apps. Tactile models and typewritten and Braille labels will explain the art. Sighted visitors can borrow macular degeneration simulation goggles to gain a sense of the exhibition experience for patrons with low vision. Details here: <http://www.massillonmuseum.org/upcoming-exhibits>

SENIOR TRANSPORTATION

If you are interested in Uber or Lyft taxi service but don't have a smart phone or feel uncomfortable using one, this source can dispatch rides for you at a nominal fee. <https://gogograndparent.com/>

APH BRAILLE TIMELINE

American Printing House for the Blind produced this Braille history timeline, starting with finger reading from the 1786 production of raised-letter books, ending with the 2017 release of the Orbit Reader, a low-cost alternative to traditional Braille displays. <http://www.aph.org/news/>



BRAILLE TRAILS & GARDENS

This new website posts a directory of all known existing Braille trails and sensory gardens, listing them by state and by country. You'll see 140 of them in 17 countries, including 89 in 30 dif-

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN DC THIS YEAR?

By Vicky Prahin

Many of you know that ACB has a seminar each February in Washington, DC, to keep the organization's leaders up to date with the most current legislation affecting our membership. Attendees spend one or two days learning about new and reintroduced bills, new trends, and other pertinent activities on the national level. On the final day of the seminar, ACB members visit Capitol Hill and talk to members of the House and Senate or a representative from their staff to provide information about the legislation important to us and answer questions. Tony Stevens, ACB's Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, recently notified us of the following legislative initiatives for this year.

This year we will continue the work on two issues from last year, which we hope have a good chance of being pushed through in the current political landscape. We will also urge Congress to put pressure on the new administration to not backtrack on its duties and responsibilities to uphold current laws that protect the civil rights of Americans who are blind.

For the last two years we have worked to get support for the Medicare Demonstration on Coverage of Low Vision Devices. Representative Carolyn Maloney of New York and co-sponsor Gus Bilirakis of Florida introduced this bill to



establish a five-year project to evaluate the fiscal impact of a permanent change to Title XVIII of the Social Security Act, allowing reimbursement for certain low vision devices, not including glasses and contact lenses. This would help people losing vision to remain independent. It has gradually gained support from members of both major political parties.

On June 28, 2013, the Marrakesh VIP Treaty, which would allow for the free exchange of accessible materials internationally for individuals who are blind and visually impaired, was adopted in Marrakesh, Morocco. It went into force on September 30, 2016, but the U.S. has not signed onto it as yet. Last year publishers, libraries, and advocates made significant progress toward a compromise that would provide consensus support of the treaty. All indications from Capitol Hill tell us that the Senate is still open to movement on this treaty, and we just need to have the U.S. Department of State transmit the ratification package to the 115th Congress. Each state will be given a template to have their Senate representatives send to the newly confirmed Secretary of State, outlining the critical need for this treaty and calling on the administration to move with haste on transmitting the treaty package to Congress for ratification by the U.S. Senate.

Finally, Mr. Stevens said:

“Continued failure by government to provide crucial information in an accessible format has long been an issue for Americans who are blind. The problem has been of particular concern within the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Social Security Administration (SSA). This, fused with concerns in the new administration that government will turn its head to particular protections protected under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, leads ACB to urge Congress to send a wake-up call to the administration, reminding them that failure to provide such accommodations is not just in violation of the Rehabilitation Act, but demonstrates a critical inefficiency of government that results in unnecessary appeals and delayed actions through a failure to provide materials in accessible formats.”

You don't have to go to Washington, DC, to make your voice heard. Call or write to your local representatives and urge them to support these important items. If you don't know who your representatives are, find out on the ACB-Ohio website, www.acbohio.org and click on the link that reads Locate your Ohio senators and representatives by zip code.

If you would like to find out more about visiting Washington next year, contact me (prahin@icloud.com) or our Executive Director, Katie Frederick (acbo.director@gmail.com).

CONGRATULATIONS, LORI!

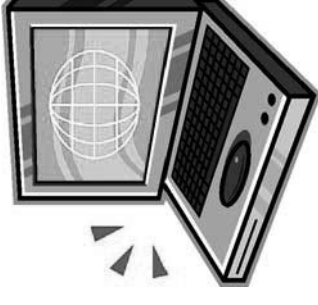


Lori Woodall, Board Member and Greater Cincinnati Chapter Vice President, was recently elected president of the Ohio State Firefighters Association Auxiliary. A longtime supporter of firefighters, she has held many offices within the organization for over twenty years. A couple of Lori's noteworthy achievements are founding the Franklin Township Fire Auxiliary in her hometown of Felicity, and before that starting a similar group in a neighboring township.

ACBO Community Shares Campaign Codes

State of Ohio 19003
City of Columbus 60240
Franklin County 60240
Ohio State University 60240
Columbus State 1061

BITS & BYTES



SUMMER CAMP FUN

Highbrook Lodge in northeast Ohio has been providing summer camp experiences for individuals with vision loss and blindness for 89 years. This summer's schedule offers something for everyone, and includes day camp and multiple-day experiences for all ages. A few of the camp's offerings include Fit & Fabulous Camp (August 5-6) for adults ages 40-60 who love being active; Young Adult Camp (August 5-6) for ages 22-40—activities include goalball, archery, canoeing and more; and Bright Futures Day Trip (Sunday July 9) for campers of all ages. More session information and a downloadable application packet can be found at www.clevelandsightcenter.org or call 216-791-8118. Application deadline is June 5.



UPDATED BSVI DIRECTORY
BSVI has updated and posted its annual compilation of vision loss and hearing loss resources. The document primarily contains Internet links and other information on general resources, advocacy groups, media and communications access, hearing aid assistance, learning resources and other information. The resources are divided as useful for deafness, blindness and deaf/blind community members. This is a downloadable Word document accessible to screen reader users. Note: document may take 30-60 seconds to download.

<http://ood.ohio.gov/Core-Services/BSVI/Vision-and-Hearing-Resources>

YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

Applications now open for OOD's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) held in Columbus from July 30-August 3. Ohio YLF is a five-day leadership training program for 11th and 12th grade students with disabilities who are interested in developing their leadership ability. Delegates from all over the state learn about choosing a career, the history of disability as a culture, available technology and resources, and self advocacy. Students get to meet professionals with disabilities and have an opportunity to develop their own Personal Leadership Plan to reach goals in education, employment and community development. Students not already working with OOD need to apply for VR services by March 31. To complete the YLF application and for additional information, visit <http://www.ood.ohio.gov/Programs/Youth-Leadership-Forum>

AFB APPLAUDS SUPREME COURT RULING IN SUPPORT OF SERVICE ANIMALS

***(From the [American Foundation for the Blind blog](#),
posted 2/22/17)***

We were very pleased to see the Supreme Court ruling today in [Fry v Napoleon Community Schools](#). The Supreme Court held unanimously that Elena Fry's family can pursue a lawsuit against her former public school district for denying access to her service dog, Wonder. The ruling made clear that if a school discriminates against a child for using a guide dog or service animal, parents are legally able to go straight to court to enforce the student's rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504.

"Nothing in the nature of the Fry's suit suggests any implicit focus on the adequacy of (Elena's) education," Justice Elena Kagan wrote. "The Frys could have filed essentially the same complaint if a public library or theater had refused admittance to Wonder." Therefore, the family does not need to exhaust all of the administrative procedures you typically have to satisfy under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Read the [full text of the ruling issued by the Supreme Court \(PDF\)](#).

MAKE YOUR MOMENTS COUNT

By Reggie Anglen

Teachable Moments, Inc., is a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to assisting persons who are 40 or older and are coping with blindness and other vision challenges.

According to figures released by Prevent Blindness Ohio and the US census, there are 9,000 residents in this age group who are without help.

You can help by visiting our secure website, www.teachablemoments.US

and volunteer, become a consumer, or donate to the cause.

We provide readers, shoppers, drivers, escorts to events, phone friends, and peer support groups.

Contact Reggie Anglen at rca2525@att.net or by phone at 614-266-9563.

MEET TWO MORE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

You read about Joe Chadbourne in the last issue. Here are two other scholarship winners.

Jenny Ham received the Nola Webb-McKinney Scholarship last October. She is a junior at the University of Cincinnati, majoring in social work and Spanish. She has volunteered with Su Casa, tutoring at the Academy of Multilingual International Studies and serving as the student teacher for an English as a second language adult night class, and is now a staff writer for *The News Record*. She is a member of the University of Cincinnati's Honors Program and has made the Dean's list for four out of five semesters.

Cassandra Mendez won the David Newmeyer Scholarship. Cassandra is a sophomore at The Ohio State University, majoring in computer science and engineering. She is involved in many extracurricular activities and has



Jenny Ham & Cassandra Mendez

The American Council of the Blind of Ohio offers six scholarships each academic year, ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500. Past recipients are eligible to apply.

Tell students you know that scholarship information, the application, and the reference form may be downloaded from www.acbohio.org or requested by calling our office at 800-835-2226. In addition to the scholarship money, each recipient receives registration and hotel accommodations for the convention, lunch tickets for up to two guests, and a one-year membership to ACBO.

School is important, but it isn't inexpensive. Help students get degrees to show what anyone can do, even with limited vision or no sight at all!

KUDOS & THANKS, AWARD WINNERS!



Ken Woodall, 2016 Ruth Davidson Award Winner

For years, Ken has been a major asset to ACB-Ohio—the Greater Cincinnati Chapter in particular. He is always eager to drive people to chapter meetings, entertainment venues, churches, restaurants, and even the state ACBO conference. If he's not personally providing the ride, he makes sure chapter members have rides through taxi or paratransit. Ken serves behind the scenes, doing the jobs that keep the chapter humming, whether it be serving as chapter parliamentarian, selling raffle tickets, or carrying boxes.

Now retired after 25 years with the Ford Motor Company, Ken plans to spend more time with family, church, travel

and helping ACB-Ohio at the local and state levels. For 43 years he has been married to his high school sweetheart, board member Lori Woodall; they have two children and five grandchildren.



Terry Olandese, 2016 Ambassador Award Winner with presenter Lori Woodall

Terry Olandese has served as president of the Greater Cincinnati chapter for a number of years and has been active at the state level on the board and as a 2016 national conference delegate. Whether it's a computer, cell phone, or your back (he is a massage therapist), he will help you fix it.

A few months ago, Terry started "Talk Back Tuesday" every first Tuesday of the month to keep the chapter connected between meetings. This conference

call is an active fellowship time with history lessons, jokes, funny stories, and items about the chapter. It's enjoyed by all who call in.

Currently, Terry is creating a website featuring short interviews with chapter members so new members and site visitors can get acquainted with the chapter. He has many talents, including playing piano, bass guitar, songwriting, and singing beautifully. He is the father of two children and grandfather of one.

WE NEED YOUR NOMINATIONS!!

Most of us enjoy recognition for what we do, but we seldom toot our own horns. Even if we find it somewhat embarrassing, it feels really good to receive an honor for a one-time special service or for years of working in the background. From the other side of that coin, it's a terrific feeling to surprise someone who isn't expecting appreciation.

Do you know a person or organization in Ohio who gives time, money, ideas, or any other kind of support to ACBO? Nominate that individual or group for an award. Don't worry if you feel uncomfortable writing; you can instead call Lori Woodall (513-876-3351), Vicky Prahin (614-949-7757), or Katie Frederick (800-835-2226) and provide the information verbally. The individual you nominate can be blind or visually

impaired or sighted; the organization can provide services, offer funding, or do something which benefits our membership.

The deadline this year is September 8. **Don't think about it; do it!** Mail letters of nomination to ACB-Ohio, 3805 North High St., Suite 305, Columbus, Ohio 43214 or send via email to acbo.awards@gmail.com.

MR. & MRS. CLAUS VISIT SENIORS



In December, Mr. and Mrs. Claus (board members Terry Olandese and Lori Woodall in costume) paid a special visit to the adult daycare where fellow board member Lita Wesley is employed. They received a very warm welcome. Every resident had his or her picture taken with Mr. Claus and received a candy cane. Mr. Claus played favorite Christmas carols on the piano, accompanied by some very strong voices. Kenny Woodall and Board Member Sue Wesley also attended.