



Fall 2020

OHIO CONNECTION

American Council of the Blind of Ohio

2020 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE DETAILS

By Katie Frederick

As we wind down 2020, life has certainly become uncertain. In ACB-Ohio land, we have had to adjust as well. We were in the midst of planning an in-person conference with Indiana when COVID came calling. After the ACB national conference, we regrouped and decided to move this year's state conference online.

On November 21, the American Council of the Blind of Ohio will hold its first virtual conference and convention. The program, exhibits, awards, and scholarship committees, and others, are hard at work putting the one-day event together. Life feels uncertain, but here are the certainties of our upcoming event thus far.

Registration will open in October, cost \$10, and enable you to participate in sessions via the Zoom platform. The registration fee also provides opportunities to win door prizes throughout the day. The details are still being fine tuned, but the conference will look very similar to an in-person event.

The morning will begin with a memorial service remembering ACB-Ohio members who have passed away this year and honoring those who are members of the military. Following the service, the annual business meeting will take place. During this meeting, anyone who is a member in good standing (has been a member at least 30 days prior to the start of the conference) is eligible to vote. Voting will take place via telephone for any contested elections. To vote, you'll call a specific phone number, provide your initials and last name, and state the number of the person for whom you wish to vote. Following the business meeting, exhibitors will have time to tell us all about their products and services. Everyone will break for lunch, and then return for afternoon workshop sessions. The program committee is working out the final topic details, but there's bound to be some tech topics and other informational goodies. After we break for dinner, we will wrap up the event with awards and scholarship presentations and the annual auction.

If you wish to donate to this year's auction, November 1 is the deadline to notify the ACB-Ohio office so the information can be added to the auction list. Shipping items to the winner is the donor's responsibility. An announcement will go out



on the email list, ACB Facebook Community Group, and the ACB-Ohio website (www.acbohio.org), when registration opens in October.

We hope you'll make plans to join us for ACB-Ohio 2020 VISION: Virtually Interacting Sharing Information Opportunities and Networking.

ACB-OHIO'S 2020 SLATE OF CANDIDATES

By Vicky Prahin and Terry Olandese

The nominating committee presents the following eligible members for election to the ACBO Board of Directors at the annual meeting in November. Eligible individuals may be nominated from the floor during the annual meeting to run in opposition to those listed below.

President: Vicky Prahin

Vicky Prahin has served ACBO since its inception, on both the state and local level. She has been secretary and president of the Columbus chapter and president and board member, as well as executive director, of ACBO.

Second Vice-President: Katie Frederick

Katie joined ACBO more than ten years ago and has served as a board member and secretary. She is currently in her second term as president of the Columbus chapter and active on the board of directors of ACB national and of the American Foundation for the Blind.

Treasurer: Jill Noble

Jill has been an active member of the Cleveland chapter for many years, serving in many roles. She has been a member of the board of directors of ACBO, acting as treasurer, among other positions, and is the current president.

Director, Position 2: Don Kalman

Don is currently president and treasurer of the Friends-'n-Focus (Medina) chapter. He has served in the past as a member of the ACBO board. He received one of the JP Morgan Chase Leadership Fellows awards in 2019 due to his excellent work in Medina and elsewhere in Ohio.

Director, Position 4: Deborah Lori Woodall

Some people know her as Debbie and some as Lori. No matter what you call her, you can add "busy." Lori has been on ACBO's board for many years, as both an officer and a director. She is the current president of the Greater Cincinnati chapter, active in the Northern Kentucky chapter, and serves in various capacities for other organizations in her spare time.

Director, Position 6: Robert R. Rogers

If you have been involved in ACBO for any time, you have probably met Rob Rogers. He is an active member of Greater Cincinnati and other Cincinnati-based organizations. He has been vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and board member of ACBO.

Director, Position 8: Dana Metcalf

Dana has been involved with the Greater Cincinnati chapter for many years and would like to serve on the state level. He brings new ideas and talents to this board position.

Director, Position 10: Alex Densmore

Alex brings technical knowledge, as well as communication skills, to the board. He has nearly completed his degree in Information Technology, has taught online, and is an active member of the Cleveland chapter.

Director, Position 11 (one-year term): Shelley Duffy

Shelley has been a member of the Columbus chapter for many years and brings new ideas and talents to the board. She enjoys working with people and will be an asset to the organization.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE ACBO CONSTITUTION

By Robert Rogers, Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chair

The ACBO constitution and bylaws committee is asking ACBO members to vote for an amendment to our constitution. It simply clarifies the point that our executive director is indeed an employee of ACBO, hired by the board of directors, serves at the pleasure of the board, and is fully accountable to the board. That means that the board hires someone to watch over ACBO’s day-to-day business because the board itself does not have time to devote to this important task.

Passing this amendment requires at least a two-thirds majority vote at the ACBO 2020 convention. To vote, you must be an ACBO member of record at least 30 days before the convention, and you must be properly registered for the convention.

Below, you will find Article 12.19 of the ACBO constitution as it currently reads followed by the proposed amendment.

Current form:

12.19. Executive Director: The executive director of the ACBO shall be in charge of the management of ACBO’s daily affairs and shall have the authority to hire and fire staff. However, the executive director is ultimately accountable to the board of direc-

tors with the president as its leader. Professional staff is subject to review and may be terminated by the board assembled or by the executive committee in the absence of the board.

Proposed amended form:

12.19. Executive Director: The ACBO executive director is employed by the ACBO board of directors and is ultimately accountable to it with the ACBO president being the director's first point of contact with the board. The director is in charge of the management of the daily affairs of ACBO for the board. This includes management of the ACBO corporate office and staff and authority to hire and fire staff.

ACB NATIONAL CONFERENCE RECAP: A SUCCESSFUL PATH TO THE FUTURE

By Shawn Thiel

When the ACB National Board announced that the 2020 convention would be taking place virtually, I was skeptical. While things like ACB Radio and Zoom were mentioned in passing, it didn't seem possible that a whole convention could be put together with so little information to go on at that time. On the other hand, this was my first national convention, so I had no real basis for comparison. Despite these misgivings, the event went extremely well, and I will describe some aspects below. The program is still available on the www.acbconvention.org website for those who are interested.

The options for attending virtually offered a great deal of flexibility. The multiple streams of ACB Radio allowed participation for those who just wanted to listen to the action. The Mainstream channel was used for the general session, as well as certain breakout sessions. The convention newspaper, *The Digital Daily*, was read at 8:30 each morning and included details such as exhibitor presentation times, advertisements, and other useful information.

Speaking of exhibits, the Community channel broadcast recordings throughout the day and repeated them through the night and into the following morning. Several exhibitors recorded a different presentation for each day, and some were very engaging and well produced. I was particularly impressed with the Guiding Eyes for the Blind program with music and multiple presenters. Treasure Trove, which normally hosts old-time radio shows, was repurposed to provide audio tours throughout the week, as described later. Other channels such as Special Event and Live Event were used as necessary when multiple breakout sessions occurred at the same time. Combined with the ACB Link app, Skills for Alexa, and the Audio Now phone number, it was possible to listen from anywhere in your home. It was nice to be able to switch from one device to another if I needed to move around or wanted to listen to tours or exhibits while eating dinner.

Tours consisted of audio-described presentations that one would hear if visiting a physical venue offering this type of access. While some of these are available as podcasts, there were a few that ACB had permission to broadcast only during the convention. The one that stood out for me (and falls into the unarchived category) was the Houston Holocaust Museum. Though I mainly wanted to see how any tour worked, I couldn't tear myself away once I started listening. Others which are available for listening now include the Great Smoky Mountains Oconaluftee Visitor Center, Klondike Gold Rush Museum, The Insect Zoo, and The Audubon Experience. With so many aspects of the virtual setup, it was easy to stop playing a tour should it not hold your interest, whereas a physical convention would mean you would be committed to the entire event.

Registration was necessary for those who wanted to attend sessions. Each evening, an email would be sent with the codes for the next day's sessions. In some ways this was easier to use than the program, which I consulted if I needed a more specific description of a planned activity when the name was unclear. I then attended the webinar or meeting using either a touch tone telephone or the Zoom Cloud Meetings app on my PC or mobile device. It was also possible to get the necessary information from the telephone information desk, manned by our own Vicky Prahin and Karen Spry.

Another advantage to the virtual format is that all recorded sessions are archived. You can find these recordings by searching for ACB Conference wherever you access podcasts. Another option is a talking book cartridge that will soon be available for \$45 from the ACB Mini Mall (877-630-6190).

This year's ACB conference made history. We had around 1,500 people registered, and the auction raised \$33,000. The number of first-time attendees was also substantially higher. Many people were able to attend who otherwise had little or no opportunity to do so in person, for reasons including finances, health, and difficulty traveling. As someone who is not the most confident traveler, it was nice not having to worry about getting lost trying to find an event. I hope that virtual components will continue to be a part of future events; this is one area where COVID-19 has been an unintended asset to the ACB community.



“Attending” the conference from the comfort of home

ACBO MEMBERSHIP CALLS

By Ann Pimley

Everyone is welcome to join us on our monthly membership calls! The membership committee started these phone conferences over two years ago to connect with at-large members; however, we have found that many chapter members and visitors also find our meetings interesting. We highly encourage you to join us.

For some of these calls we have a featured speaker, and for others we have a group discussion and share information. We always have a few minutes for people to ask the speakers questions or to ask for information from other members. It is a great way to meet new people, learn about topics relevant to the visually impaired, and to exchange information and ideas.

We meet the second Sunday of the month at 7:30 p.m. and are done by around 9 p.m. Upcoming calls are on October 11, November 8, and December 13—please put these dates on your calendar.

We use Zoom. Join in one of the following ways:

Use the link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6142613561>, which will launch Zoom if you have it installed on your computer or mobile device.

Call in on your landline or cell phone using 646-558-8656 or 669-900-9128. Whether you use a computer or a phone, enter the meeting ID 614 261 3561. If calling in, you have plenty of time to enter the meeting ID followed by the pound sign. When asked for a participant ID, press pound again. If you join before the host starts the meeting, you will hear that the meeting has not yet started and hear music.

We hope that all of you will join us! If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Ann Pimley, Kelsey Nicolay, or Shawn Thiel.

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WHEN I MET VOICECORPS

By Chuck Adkins

Editor's note: Chuck Adkins is the director of operations at the radio reading service where ACBO has a monthly program.

It seems like yesterday, but it was over 40 years ago. In 1977, my neighbor Jean, the wife of Fred Allemeier, one of the founders of the Central Ohio Radio Reading Service, showed up at my door with a wooden radio with an antenna, speaker, volume knob, and a switch on the back to choose from WOSU FM (which at that time was playing classical music) or the reading service. She showed me the radio, I thanked her kindly, and she left. I listened, found a sports talk show with my former OSSB history teacher Bernie Ryan, and discovered *The Columbus Dispatch*. The reading service held my interest, but I became so busy working for WBBY and raising kids that I didn't have much time to listen.



Chuck Adkins, VOICEcorps director of operations, listens to one of the station's special radios and smiles.

A few years later, while I was part-time production director at WBBY Westerville, I decided to volunteer in the control room at the reading service, which later became known as VOICEcorps. My first day I pulled a patchcord resulting in an hour and a half of dead audio on the tape recording of the afternoon *Columbus Dispatch*. At that time, we had two papers, *The Citizen-Journal* read during the morning and *The Dispatch* recorded in the early afternoon for 5 p.m. playback. What a debut, right?

Around Thanksgiving, Irwin Hott, the reading service's technical director at that time, told me of a fulltime evening opening. I took it. My first day there, I started a program on a reel to reel at 4:30 p.m. and everything went okay—I thought. Then someone came in and told me that I had hit the edit button instead of the play button on the tape machine. For those who don't know, the edit button allowed the left reel to turn but the right-hand reel doesn't move. Can you imagine what 20 minutes of tape looks like running all over the place? I was not enthused. I recovered from my mishaps and I learned a lot more than I bargained for.

I point all these things out to delineate the big difference between the reading service and other radio stations. I must admit, I became a bit disappointed at one time in my

career that I was not doing more commercial radio. But then it occurred to me, I'm doing real radio. Radio is people serving people and that's what we do here at VOICEcorps. I've been here for 40 years, and in that time I've met some of the most beautiful people, and it happened because of Irwin Hott's patience and help, teaching me about the business. I also had to get used to the difference between commercial and non-commercial radio and how things move at a different pace. In 1982, I began what turned out to be an over 30-year, part-time career at WOSU radio, and along the way I've had quite a few voiceover work experiences.

The biggest thing I've learned in my 40 years working at VOICEcorps is how much it has to offer, with articles about anything and everything. I was shocked when I first started hearing the newspaper, it was amazing to me. It still amazes me how difficult it can be for people to make the transition from broadcast copy to print copy.

Overall, I look back on my time with VOICEcorps and hope that something I've done has helped someone's life and made them smile, because the listeners and volunteers have made me smile. When a volunteer comes into the station, I feel it is my self-appointed duty to make them laugh at least once before they leave, even if they don't want to. In actuality, I think it does me more good than them. You are as happy as you make up your mind to be, and I have been truly blessed and will always be eternally grateful. For you see my friend, one day, I was lucky enough to meet VOICEcorps. Someday, may you also be so lucky.



TWO HISTORIC CAUSES FOR CELEBRATION

By Jill Noble

Change is part of life, and in 2020 it certainly has been! We all have had to change the way we do things—our jobs, shop, socialize, travel, communicate, etc. It has become a bit overwhelming, and most people have trouble finding things to celebrate in this new world, however, we have to do our best to move forward, think positively, and honor our accomplishments. Two important causes for celebration come to mind. This is the 100th year since the adoption of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, granting women the right to vote, and the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Single women in New Jersey could vote in 1797 because their state constitution said that those worth 50 pounds were eligible to vote. Once married, those women lost that privilege since any property became the husband's. Ten years later, New Jersey changed that law, giving the vote only to men 21 years and older. Wyoming's first territorial legislature, all male, voted in 1869 to give women the right to vote and to hold

public office. The territory retained its woman suffrage law even when that law jeopardized Wyoming Territory's application for statehood. In 1890, Wyoming became the first U.S. state allowing its women to vote.

On January 10, 1878, California senator Aaron Sargent, with the support of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, proposed an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to allow women to vote. Although the House or Representatives held hearings, members ignored the proceedings by staring into space or reading as the debate continued. The bill was reintroduced each year for 41 years before finally passing into law on August 18, 1920. That Amendment reads:



President Bush signing the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

George H.W. Bush signed the ADA into law on July 26, 1990. The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, State and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications. It also applies to the United States Congress. To be protected by the ADA, one must have a disability or have a relationship or association with an individual with a disability. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. The ADA does not specifically name all the impairments that are covered. Disability is defined as the inability to pursue an occupation because of a physical or mental impairment; specifically, the inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity because of a medically determinable physical or mental impairment that can be expected to result in death or to be of long continued or indefinite duration in accordance with the Social Security Act.

Find more information at the Department of Justice's ADA Website, www.ADA.gov, or call the ADA Information Line at 800-514-0301 (Voice), 800-514-0383 (TTY).

LOOKING AHEAD—VIKING CRUISES COMES TO THE US

By Vicky Prahin

Many of us have grown restless, spending most of the time at home. It's hard to plan anything since we don't have fixed timelines, pinned down by the weight and held back by the ties of our unfriendly new neighbor, COVID-19. I have decided to look ahead and focus on fantasies, thinking about having some fun and getting back into the world, simultaneously learning about US history and visiting places I heard about in school. Those of you who have received the *Ohio Connection* for a while will remember Katie Frederick's story about a trip down France's River Seine in the spring of 2016 (see the summer 2016 edition). Katie and I both thoroughly enjoyed that trip and later ones, traveling with Viking Cruises. The ships are small, comfortable, and easy to get around; the staff is unparalleled for helpfulness and friendliness.



The Viking Mississippi



A lively brass band marches in the French Quarter, New Orleans, one of the stops on the Mississippi River tours

Viking has been in business for about 20 years, focusing on river cruises throughout Europe. A few years ago, they expanded to ocean voyages, and they plan to offer cruises of the Mississippi River beginning in 2022.

The new, state-of-the-art Viking Mississippi five-deck ship features al fresco dining on the Aquavit Terrace, a glass-backed infinity plunge pool, and scenic sailing from the two-story Explorers' Lounge. There are several trips to choose from and include such highlights as New Orleans's festive French Quarter and

Creole cuisine, Cajun heritage in Baton Rouge, Vicksburg National Military Park, BBQ and Delta blues in Memphis, Mark Twain's boyhood home, St. Louis's Gateway Arch, Norwegian cultural experience at Vesterheim, St Paul, the River Museum Dubuque, and the John Deere tractor working farm.

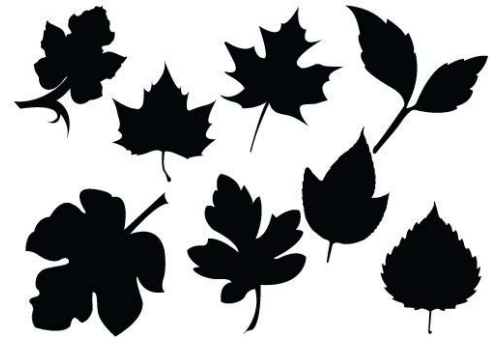
Check out the options at vikingcruises.com or call Viking at 855-338-4546.



**ACBO Community Shares
Campaign Codes**

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

***The longest trip lasts 15 days,
cruising from St. Paul to New
Orleans, with several exciting
stops along the way.***



**Michelle Spillan, Editor / Newsletter Committee: Katie Frederick,
Irwin Hott, Jenna McCartney, Jill Noble, Vicky Prahin**

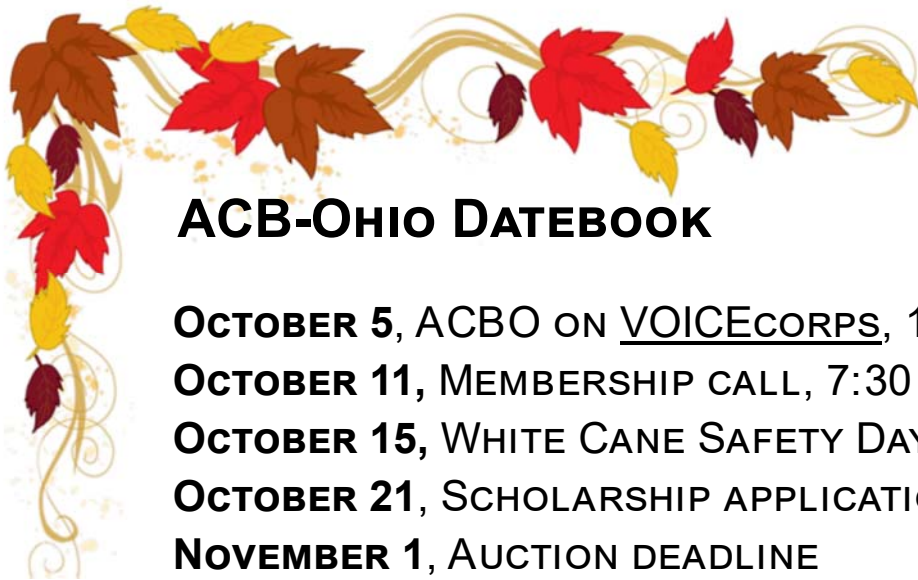
As always, thanks to the contributors: **Chuck Adkins, Katie Frederick, Jill Noble, Ann Pimley, Vicky Prahin, Rob Rogers, and Shawn Thiel.** The *Ohio Connection* is a quarterly publication of the American Council of the Blind of Ohio. Please submit your material in print or through e-mail, and include your name, address, and phone number. E-mail items to acbo.newsletter@gmail.com or send them to the address below. The winter issue deadline is **November 15.**

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FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND



ACB-OHIO DATEBOOK

OCTOBER 5, ACBO on VOICECORPS, 11 A.M.

OCTOBER 11, MEMBERSHIP CALL, 7:30 P.M.

OCTOBER 15, WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY

OCTOBER 21, SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE

NOVEMBER 1, AUCTION DEADLINE

NOVEMBER 2, ACBO on VOICECORPS, 11 A.M.

NOVEMBER 8, MEMBERSHIP CALL, 7:30 P.M.

NOVEMBER 15, NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

NOVEMBER 20, BOARD MEETING

NOVEMBER 21, ACBO VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

DECEMBER 7, ACBO on VOICECORPS, 11 A.M.

DECEMBER 13, MEMBERSHIP CALL, 7:30 P.M.