



Winter 2020

# ***OHIO CONNECTION***

American Council of the Blind of Ohio

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

*By Vicky Prahin*

I was pleased to be elected to the office of president at this year's business meeting of the American Council of the Blind of Ohio's first virtual convention. I owe thanks to Terry Olandese and the nominating committee for putting my name on the slate, to the membership in attendance for electing me, and to Jill Noble for filling this position for the past three years and keeping us on track.

I have given some thought to what I would like to see happen over the next two years. I am open to ideas from anyone who has any to share. I have not yet discussed my hopes with the board; our first meeting will take place on January 16, and I hope that some of you will choose to participate. You will hear more about that meeting after the first of the year.

Over the last several years, our board of directors has talked about finding grants to help with the costs of at least some of our programs. We have explored a few leads and have learned things we needed to do to lay more solid groundwork, giving us a better chance of obtaining what we apply for. One of the areas in which we spend most is scholarships. We have six of them, most set up ten, 15, or more years ago, and we receive few donations to keep those alive. The most recently established scholarship, the Friends of Freshmen, is generously funded every year, and we are very grateful for that. That leaves five others, with a total value of \$11,000, covered from our general fund. In the next few months, I hope we will be in contact with at least one foundation which specializes in scholarships to find out how we apply for its funding.

Our members are welcome and encouraged to serve on the many committees that help keep ACBO functioning. A list of those committees follows and will also be posted on the listserv in the next few weeks. If you are not a part of the listserv and would like to join, contact the executive director ([acbo.director@gmail.com](mailto:acbo.director@gmail.com)). It's a great way to keep up with what's going on with ACBO.

Please consider giving some of your time and talent to ACBO in the coming year. Once again, thanks to everyone for giving me the opportunity to serve as president; you will hear more from me as we move into 2021.

# ACBO COMMITTEES OFFER MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Below is a list of standing committees on which any ACBO member can serve. If you have an interest in any of these areas, contact the office ([acbo.director@gmail.com](mailto:acbo.director@gmail.com)) or the president ([vickyprahin@gmail.com](mailto:vickyprahin@gmail.com)).

## **Awards Committee**

Purpose: Solicits, collects, and considers nominations for the seven awards we offer. Selects recipients; arranges for the preparation of awards and distributes them at the banquet during the conference and convention. Another article in this publication provides more information about the awards, as well as a bio of this year's recipient of the Ken Morlock award.

## **Fundraising Committee**

Purpose: Explores and implements ways to bring in donations to support the organization. Plans and carries out any resulting fundraising activities.

## **Legislative Committee**

Purpose: To keep current on legislation within and outside the state, update the membership, and contact legislators to present and support our needs. Plans the annual DC trip.

## **Membership Committee**

Purpose: To devise ways of increasing new membership and maintaining current membership.

## **Newsletter Committee**

Purpose: To help solicit and gather items for the *Ohio Connection* each quarter. Organizes, edits, and lays out articles.

## **Nominating Committee**

Purpose: Solicits candidates for incumbent and open officer and board positions prior to the annual convention. Prepares the slate for publication in the fall newsletter and to the ACBO list at least 30 days before the annual business meeting and conducts elections.

## **Program Planning Committee**

Purpose: Plans and prepares the program for the conference and convention. Works with the site and exhibits subcommittees. Acquires speakers and presenters and arranges transportation and/or accommodations as necessary; plans meals and other activities; prepares hard copy programs; promotes the convention throughout the state; plans for and records events during the convention for placement on the website.

## **Scholarship Committee**

Purpose: Disseminates information about our six scholarships throughout the state. Receives and vets applications, chooses recipients, and confers awards during the conference and convention. Arranges transportation and accommodation for winners and a parent/guardian as needed. Ensures that recipients are registered and that other requirements for attendance are taken care of.

## **Sports and Recreation Committee**

Purpose: Promotes and plans the summer and winter sports retreats and other activities in which members may participate.

# **ACBO AWARDS**

ACB-Ohio offers seven awards to honor people and organizations and communities that promote, support, and help those who are blind or have low vision. This year we were able to present only one award, but one which was thoroughly deserved. Chuck Adkins is a graduate of OSSB and always wanted to be in radio. He has found work in his chosen field and will celebrate his 47th year doing what he loves next summer. He started to work at the radio reading service in Columbus, now called VOICEcorps, in 1980. After he received the 2020 Ken Morlock award, he said, "That award shocked me and meant so much to me. Honestly though, I'm really not all that!!!" Listen to [voicecorps.org](http://voicecorps.org) and see what you think.



***Chuck Adkins, 2020 Ken Morlock Award Winner***

Consider nominating someone you admire for 2021. Here are the awards we offer.

The KEN MORLOCK AWARD goes to a person who is blind or visually impaired who has worked to improve the lives of 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 Chuck Adkins, introduced earlier, and Katie Frederick, the current second vice-president.



***James Duffield, Arlene Cohen Art of Teaching Award winner (left) and Chris Schumacher, Ruth Davidson Award winner***

The RUTH DAVIDSON AWARD honors a person who has worked hard to enhance the lives of those who are blind or visually impaired. Recipients of this award include ACBO's administrative assistant Michelle Spillan and Chris Schumacher, who has just completed a third term as ACBO treasurer.

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 ACBO very important. James Duffield, from Pickerington, and Cecelia Peirano, currently at the Ohio State School for the Blind, have received this award. Tell us about your special teachers!

The AMBASSADOR AWARD goes to an ACB-Ohio member who has worked hard on behalf of ACBO and the blind community. Terry Olandese, our current first vice-president, and past president Linda Wyman 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 and the Newsreel, 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 and in 2017 Concept Services of Medina was our most recent winner.

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 Medina Lions Club and the city of Columbus. It's never too early to submit your nominations. You can submit them to the office at [acbo.director@gmail.com](mailto:acbo.director@gmail.com) or to the chair of the awards committee, Melody Banks.

# 2020 CONFERENCE AND CONVENTION: A VIRTUAL SUCCESS

*By Katie Frederick*

2020 has presented us with numerous challenges, including adapting an in-person conference to a virtual event. When the year began, ACB-Ohio was anticipating a road trip to Bloomington, Indiana, for a joint Ohio-Indiana conference; however, over the summer our board voted to hold the event online. Months of meetings and planning culminated in the 2020 Virtual Conference and Convention, held November 21 via the Zoom webinar platform. The theme was **2020 VISION: Virtually Interacting Through Information Sharing Opportunities and Networking.**

Saturday morning activities began with a service honoring members who passed away and thanking veterans for their service to our country. The annual business meeting was next on the agenda. The online format made voting a challenge, but we were successful in electing new officers and members of the organization's board of directors. Vicky Prahin was elected to a two-year term as president; Katie Frederick was elected second vice-president; and D Pimley was elected to his first term as treasurer. Additionally, Tonya Adams, Alex Densmore, Shelley Duffy, Dana Metcalf, and Lori Woodall were elected to the board. Thanks to outgoing board members Irwin Hott, Jenna McCartney, Leah Noble, and Rob Rogers for their years of service. We look forward to their continued involvement.

Following the business meeting, afternoon sessions began. The first session featured Cincinnati Reds Radio broadcaster Tommy Thrall, who spoke about his broadcasting career and told stories about his Reds baseball experiences thus far.

The second session of the afternoon was all about games. 64 Oz. Games discussed how they have adapted games for people who are blind or experiencing vision loss. Lita Wesley, of the Greater Cincinnati Chapter, shared accessible game ideas they have played on the phone Friday nights during the pandemic. Others shared accessible games including iPhone apps and options on the PC.

Saturday afternoon's final workshop featured Jyoti Rai, who shared her experiences as a blind refugee in two countries and her journey to the United States seven years ago. She is currently a student at the University of North Dakota and will graduate in May 2021 with a major in psychology. Her young life experiences illustrate the freedoms we have here and remind us that we have a lot for which to be grateful in the USA.

The evening concluded with an award presentation. Chuck Adkins received the Ken Morlock award for his years of outstanding service to the Ohio blind and visually impaired community through his work at VOICEcorps. The final event of the 2020 virtual

conference and convention was the annual auction, a fun fundraiser which brought in close to \$1,500.

Conferences and conventions, whether in-person or virtual, would not be possible without volunteers, and this year was no exception. I want to thank the members of the program committee: Brant Adams, Melody Banks, Leah Noble, Jill Noble, Vicky Prahin, Karen Spry, Shawn Thiel, and Lori Woodall. Thank you to ACB national for the use of the Zoom webinar platform; and Deb Cook Lewis for sending invitations, streaming on ACB Radio, and assisting with the auction. Doug Hunsinger and Debbie Hazelton, thank you for keeping us on the ACB Radio airwaves. A special thanks to Donna Brown for her Zoom assistance throughout the entire conference. Stay tuned to the *Ohio Connection* as we begin planning for 2021.

## **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 hope you will join us. We meet the second Sunday of the month at 7:30 p.m. and are done by around 9 p.m. Please put these meeting dates on your calendar for 2021: January 10, February 14, March 14, April 11, May 9, and June 13.

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 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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## COOKING FOR SIXTY YEARS

*By Irwin Hott*

If you weren't lucky enough to win a copy of *Cooking for Sixty Years* as a conference door prize, you can always purchase it from the Newsreel. The cookbook features more than 100 scrumptious recipes contributed by Newsreel staff, subscribers, and friends. Recipe categories in the book include breakfast, appetizers, breads, salads, soups, side dishes, main dishes, and desserts.

As many of you know, the Newsreel is an audio magazine in the voices of our blind and visually impaired subscribers and is available in several formats. In addition to the monthly magazine, we have produced three cookbooks since 2007. The first, *The Kitchen Korner*, was written by Maggie Nettles, who submitted recipes and poetry to The Newsreel for many years. *In the Newsreel Kitchen* and *Cooking for Sixty Years* were both prepared by our executive director, Kate Sniderman, who compiled recipes sent in by our subscribers.

All three cookbooks are available in braille (one volume each), large print, and regular print, for \$20. *Cooking for Sixty Years* is available on a cartridge or a flash drive in audio DAISY format for \$25. For information about the cookbook or to request a free trial subscription to Newsreel, call 614-469-0700 or send an e-mail to [info@newsreelmag.org](mailto:info@newsreelmag.org).



# ACB NATIONAL CONFERENCE RECORDINGS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

Podcasts from the 2020 ACB Conference and Convention are now available and include all general sessions and ACB evening programming; affiliate, committee and business partner sessions; plus exhibitors and many audio-described tours.

This year ACB offers the option of getting all this information on a thumb drive, SD card, or cartridge. The cost is \$45 for either of these options. There are 235 files totaling 191 hours of content.

To purchase, call the Minneapolis office at 612-332-3242. Have your credit card information available including the card number, expiration date and CVB code which can be found on the back of your card. Please allow at least 4 to 6 weeks for delivery. NOTE: If you have already ordered a cartridge it will be automatically sent to you.

## NEW LIST SHARES ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS ON BLINDNESS TECHNOLOGY

*By David Goldfield, Blindness Assistive Technology Specialist*

Many years ago, an amazing woman named Amy Ruell ran a wonderful and memorable mailing list called Amy's Filters and Forwards. Subscribers to her list received email announcements from other mailing lists regarding new products and services, product upgrades and other messages of interest to the visually impaired. I found that list to be informative and invaluable. Sadly, the list ceased operations.

For quite some time I have often been doing a little of what Amy had done where I send similar announcements to mailing lists to which I'm subscribed. I have decided to start my own announce-only list providing what I hope will be a similar service. This list will be comprised of mailings containing these various announcements. The types of emails that I plan to distribute may include the following:

- News regarding hardware and software upgrades
- New blindness products and services
- News regarding enhancements to blindness services
- Employment opportunities which may be of interest or relevance to the visually Impaired
- Upcoming webinars and conferences dealing with blindness technology

- How-to articles containing tips and tricks on using mainstream technology of interest to the visually impaired, such as the iPhone, Microsoft Office, etc.

Whenever possible I will also include a URL at the bottom of each announcement leading to the original source material. While the list won't consist of any back and forth discussions, I do expect that this will be a high-traffic list. I will no longer be submitting announcements to other lists to which I'm subscribed. People who wish to continue receiving these announcements must subscribe to the new list.

To subscribe, send an email to [Tech-vi+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:Tech-vi+subscribe@groups.io). If you have material that you'd like me to submit to the list, please send it to: [Tech-vi+owner@groups.io](mailto:Tech-vi+owner@groups.io)

Please include the source URL when sending me material. If a source link is not included, I will not post your announcement. If you wish to submit an announcement regarding an upcoming webinar or conference, please include a link containing more information, such as a description and a registration form. The announcement should be relevant to blindness technology and I reserve the right to decide whether it will or won't be submitted to the list.

I won't claim that my list will be nearly as comprehensive as Amy's original list, as I don't feel that I have the time needed to even try and duplicate her efforts. However, it is my hope that the list will help people to keep up with the latest news and trends in the blindness technology space.

Here is hoping that all of you will try to stay as safe and healthy as possible during these trying times.

## **NEW NATIONAL CONFERENCE DATES: JULY 16–23**

On December 2, The American Council of the Blind Board of Directors voted to change the dates for the 2021 virtual conference to July 16 to July 23. The change enables convention attendees to enjoy the primetime Olympics broadcasts, which will be audio described. The banquet will be held on Thursday, July 22; the evening of July 23 will focus on the Olympics opening ceremony. Stay tuned for details. Please feel free to contact Janet Dickelman with questions either via phone 651-428-5059 or email [janet.dickelman@gmail.com](mailto:janet.dickelman@gmail.com).



# WORLD BLIND UNION STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The World Blind Union (WBU) joined the rest of the world on December 3, 2020, in observing the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The theme was “building back better, toward a disability-inclusive, accessible, and sustainable post Covid-19 world”.

The annual observance was proclaimed in 1992 by United Nations General Assembly. It aims to promote the rights and wellbeing of persons with disabilities and to increase awareness of their situation in every aspect of political, social, economic, and cultural life.

As the world grapples with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, many decisions by policymakers have failed to take into consideration the rights of persons with disabilities enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS). This is evident in WBU’s recent report “Covid-19, Amplifying Voices: Our Lives, Our Say” following a global study which examines the extent to which the pandemic has exposed some deep structural inequalities in society. Data gathered from the study shows that persons with disabilities, older persons, and persons from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds are among those hardest hit by the pandemic. While this report puts a spotlight on the voices of blind and partially sighted persons, many of the experiences shared strongly resonate with numerous other studies conducted by other organizations of persons with disabilities internationally.

In order to ensure that no one is left behind in any aspect, WBU calls for effective collaboration with representative organizations of persons with disabilities, governments, communities, civil society, UN and other international agencies, and the private sector as we collectively strive to build and sustain a better, more inclusive post-COVID society.

The World Blind Union (WBU) is the global organization that represents the estimated 253 million people worldwide who are blind or partially sighted. Members consist of organizations of blind people advocating on their own behalf and organizations that serve the blind, in over 190 countries, as well as international organizations working in the field of vision impairment. Visit [www.worldblindunion.org](http://www.worldblindunion.org) to learn more.



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

As always, thanks to the contributors: **Katie Frederick, David Goldfield, Irwin Hott, Ann Pimley, and Vicky Prahin.** 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 spring issue deadline is **February 15.**

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**ACBO Community Shares  
Campaign Codes**

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





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FREE MATTER  
FOR THE BLIND



## **ACB-OHIO DATEBOOK**

**JANUARY 4**, ACBO ON VOICECORPS, 11 A.M.

**JANUARY 10**, MEMBERSHIP CALL, 7:30 P.M.

**JANUARY 16**, ACBO BOARD MEETING

**FEBRUARY 1**, ACBO ON VOICECORPS, 11 A.M.

**FEBRUARY 14**, MEMBERSHIP CALL, 7:30 P.M.

**FEBRUARY 15**, MEMBERSHIP DUES DEADLINE

**FEBRUARY 15**, NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

**MARCH 1**, ACBO ON VOICECORPS, 11 A.M.

**MARCH 14**, MEMBERSHIP CALL, 7:30 P.M.

**JULY 16-23**, ACB NATIONAL CONFERENCE (VIRTUAL)