



GEM STATE MILESTONES

Fall 2017

A Publication of the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF IDAHO

Allan Schneider, Editor • Garden City
aaschneider@hotmail.com
(208) 870-4831

Dana Ard, President • Boise
danalynard@q.com
(208) 345-3906

NATIONAL WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY OCTOBER 15, 2017 LIVE!: 3 BANDS FOR BLIND KIDS



In conjunction with National White Cane Safety Day on October 15th, the National Federation of the Blind of Idaho will host the concert “3 Bands for Blind Kids.” The concert will feature The Hoochie Coochie Men (of Boise Blues Society renown), The Mystics (incredibly together 1961 to 1970 and 1982 to present), and Gerry & the Dreambenders (British invasion-era rock and roll tribute show). All three bands are contributing their time and talents to raise money for programs for blind kids in Idaho. See page eight for more info.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS LOOKING FORWARD AND REFLECTING BACK

Dana Ard, NFBI President

In the Federation, we are always busy, but summer brings the joy, information, education and inspiration of our national convention. This year 27 NFBI members attended, 20 receiving assistance from an American Action Fund grant obtained by Ramona Walhof. Megan Geisler received a Jernigan scholarship to assist her to attend. Megan is the third person to receive this scholarship in the last three years. If you are an NFB member and have never attended our national convention, I would urge you to apply for this scholarship. The application for scholarships is announced in the Braille Monitor in January or February. Please contact me if you have questions.

On September 8, members of the Treasure Valley Chapter met with the Central Idaho Chapter in Twin Falls for a chapter building activity. Mai Nguyen has stepped up to be chapter president

Available in large print, email, Braille, Newsline or on our website: www.nfbidaho.org

since Chris and Judy Jones' move to Washington state. Although new to the NFB of Idaho, Mai has a lot of good ideas and with the help of all of us, she will be successful.

I have been involved with other activities for our affiliate including teaching a six-week Interpersonal Communications class for the ICBVI SWEP students, attending a presentation from the Idaho Nonprofit Council on planned giving, participating on the Commission for Libraries Talking Book advisory committee, attending the ICBVI board meeting and providing a report, attending a fundraising lunch for the Northwest Association for Blind Athletes, working to get the word out about our concert, "3 Bands for Blind Kids", and speaking to a local support group about the NFB and NFB Newslines.

The NFBI board meeting will be October 14 from noon until 6:00 P.M. at ICBVI. This is an open meeting and all are welcome. We will have a legislative luncheon on January 15, along with our winter board meeting. Restoring state funding for the talking book service will be one of the main topics of the legislative luncheon. Mark your calendars for our 2018 state convention at the Red Lion in Twin Falls April 26-28.

Let's continue to work together to build the National Federation of the Blind of Idaho to help blind people to live the life they want.

APOEMABOUTCOLORS

Abi Jepsen

What I think about colors.
My friend Casey has brown hair like a baby bear.
Has a pink skirt on one like Abby Cadabby.
Has blue eyes like the sky.

What I think about when it's dark.
The dark sky is black like Pepper are black cat.
The stars are yellow like our baby ducklings.

When it's morning time.
The green grass and the green trees remind me of Oscar the Grouch.
The yellow sun he reminds me as big bird.
The sky is like a blue car with pink and white fluffy skirts.

Simmi peppers sister cat is white and orange
like the white part is sugar, the orange part like cinnamon.
And peppers eyes are like the bushes.
Simmi's eyes are like cookie monster.

Cody's mallards Egghead and Fluffhead have green heads like the beautiful leaves on the trees.

The flowers like daffodils so have white and yellow.

White part is like a plate

the yellow part is like the cup or what ever The daffodils have.

Dandy lions are like yellow means the dandy lion milk is like white fluffy clouds.

When there's a thunderstorm going on you can imagine white flashes the pier and they away. As quick as lightning .

You can imagine your Brailier is blue if you want.

And if you look up you can imagine there's light that yellow or whatever.

Our car is very dark blue.

When I could see it looked like a black car to me but it was always blue.

If you found a board you could just think it's light brown.

Only if you painted it then you would imagine a different color.

Editor's note: Abi is a nine-year-old from Moscow. She was adopted from Ethiopia when she was four, and lost her vision at age six from congenital glaucoma. Her mom, Erin, is Treasurer for the Palouse Chapter of NFBI.



BAKER'S RECIPES

Tips and techniques around the house

by Lisa Baker

The most recent trend in our local grocery stores seems to be curb side pickup, plus Albertson's is now delivering. I am not sure why this seems to be the current trend, but I wanted to make sure and get the information out there, because these services can be helpful for those of us who are unable to drive. Wall-mart and Fred Meyer are only doing curb side pickup and, as previously mentioned, Albertsons is delivering. I have not had the opportunity to check out all the websites thoroughly, but Fred Meyer and Albertsons seem to be quite accessible. If you are not able to have a friend or family pick up the groceries for you, Boise City Taxi will pick up the groceries for \$6.00. There are also a couple of local farms that are delivering as well. I personally love Brown Box Organics, but I have also used Boise Milk as well. Both companies deliver a variety of products including: meat, dairy, produce, bakery, and a large amount of pantry items. Give me a call (208-334-3220). I am happy to get you contact information on any of these services.

BOISE BELL ACADEMY

Alison Steven

I came home the first Monday of BELL Academy with a broken foot! I came home from the second Monday of BELL Academy with a knee soaked with Giant Tortoise urine! Suffice it to say that this year's BELL Academy was in some ways extra-ordinary!

Our theme was "Explore! Learn! Grow!" and we certainly did that. We had 13 students including two who were acting as teacher assistants/mentors to younger students, and 12 staff members, and the halls of St. Joseph's Catholic School were constantly filled with the voices of children investigating their surroundings, laughing at jokes, devouring snacks, and on some days the sounds of sawing. Along with the regular classes of Braille reading, Braille writing, cane travel, non-visual skills, and Assistive Technology, we had a wonderful variety of activities and field trips. These included a visit to the bus depot to explore the buses, two sessions of yoga, experimenting with various tools (including a chain saw) in the wood shop at Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, a recording session in the booth at the Talking Book Library, pottery, dance, and a visit from Corbin Maxey's Reptile Menagerie (hence the Giant tortoise pee!)

We had a dynamic and happy two-week program with the whole team working together to make sure everything ran smoothly. I was especially delighted by the visiting guest teachers (seven of them) who came to teach non-visual skills for a day (or two). They covered all sorts of skills starting the first day with planting basil seeds, and, on subsequent days, using wrenches and screwdrivers, measuring objects, spreading frosting and adding blueberry, Braille, brushing hair and teeth, using cafeteria

trays, cutting food, and exploring tactile maps. My thanks go out to all who played a part in making BELL Academy such a special time. I have watched some of the students at BELL for five years now and am thrilled to see how they are maturing and changing. Watch out for these kids! And as the words of our theme song say:

Use your hands, use your feet,
Use your ears, use your nose,
Get on up, Get on out!
Have some fun and start to grow!
Find something new to do,
Find something new to know!
You've got what it takes so
Explore, learn and grow!



Izak (with his explorer hat) using a chain-saw at ICBVI with help from Justin Fish

SNAKE RIVER VALLEY BELL ACADEMY 2017

Sandy Streeter



BELL students holding the bird houses they made

Our BELL Academy ran from July 24 through August 4th. This was the fifth year for us. Unfortunately we can't seem to grow and sustain more than three children. These three children have been excited to come every year and renew their friendships. We were grateful to have two teenage assistants this year. Sarah is a sighted sister of Mei, and Nicole is a blind high school junior and member of our chapter. These young women jump in and help whenever or whatever the need.

Creativity is a must to keep things exciting and fun. Instead of using the

standard sleep shades (now being called learning shades), we ordered rainbow colored ones. For the Braille reading center, we had everyone sit on pillows on the floor. A book was chosen by the group and everyone took time reading aloud. There was only one copy of the book in Braille, but Braille Note Touches were also used. We referred to this as our Book Club, and there were a couple of times the kids took the initiative to do it without leader prompting.

It's always a pleasure for me to plan field trips. My hope is that the activity will be providing an opportunity to learn and improve non-visual skills, build confidence, and always be fun! This year we walked around a business district by the river where we encountered various obstacles and street crossings. This trip concluded with a bus trip back to the classroom. We toured the Idaho Falls Airport and met with the mayor. The Airport Director said they would contact us next year to come back.

Our last day was a day of rock climbing and repelling. Yes, the real thing outside. The rock was about 75-feet high. The children absolutely loved it! This activity was led by three professional rock climbers. The blind leaders also repelled. That's BELL Academy 2017.

PARKS ARE THERE TO BE ENJOYED

Scholarship winner, Lori Adler

I thank all of you for the scholarship I received. I heard about the scholarship through Jackie Stallings, my vocational Rehab Counselor in Coeur D Alene. I have been attending Lewis and Clark State College for one year now and have two more years left for my bachelor degree. I have been volunteering with a veterans group for the last three years. I had two brothers in the military as well, hence my master degree will be on Blind Rehabilitation with an emphasis on veterans. According to the BVA, about 49,000 veterans came back with some kind of eye injury. I believe this is my calling, since I know what it is like to suddenly lose one's sight.

I also believe in physical exercise to promote mental health. Our government has been so kind to give us life passes to the National Parks. I spend a lot of time going to these parks and promoting that being blind does not equate being unable. I have succeeded, in various parks, to change that stigma by "doing". Rangers who heard about us were willing to help find trails and suggested pos-



Scholarship Winner, Lori Adler

sible navigations. We have started a Facebook site that is geared to bringing awareness to all that the Parks are there to be enjoyed, be it the smells, the sounds or the occasional tumbles that go with hiking. Canyon lands has a topographical map done in relief, and they also have a Braille pamphlet to accompany the hikes.

I would say that what I aim to do with my life is to bring to light, to both sighted and non-sighted, that blind is not a handicap, just a hurdle. Again, thank you for the scholarship money. I have thought of purchasing new equipment, but I have not found what I want so far.

MEET THE BOARD - JOE THOMPSON

A Series Introducing the NFBI State Board

I grew up in a steel mill town on the Ohio River and lived there through high school where I worked as a janitor after my father died at age 51 when I was 16. I studied engineering at Tri State College in Angola, IN, for two years, then transferred to OSU in Columbus, OH.

After graduating I worked on my uncle's farm in Colfax, WA, driving truck and tractor and doing odd jobs. After two years of that, I got restless and joined the Jesuit Volunteer Corp to serve as a maintenance man for a radio station and church in Nome, AK. After that, I got a job at the University of Idaho as an engineering technician while working on a masters degree.

I was diagnosed with RP at age 24 but still had good functional vision at that time. Anxious for adventure after 4 years at U of I, I joined the Peace Corps and was sent to Tunisia after successfully appealing a medical flag due to my RP. There I worked with apprentice mechanics in the repair shop of a government farm.

When I returned, I was very fortunate to find a placement at the U of I in my previous department where I pursued a PhD in Education and worked as a research technician until I elected to retire in 2013. My vision at that time was such that I could no longer drive and I required low vision aids for reading and computer work. I also needed some training and attended the ATC in Boise for three months where I found encouragement and inspiration in my exceptional teachers and fellow students.

At this point in my life, I am again working part time at the U of I and serving as the president of the Palouse Empire chapter of the NFBI.



The National Federation of the Blind of Idaho presents

3 Bands for Blind Kids

A musical performance to benefit blind children of Idaho



The Hoochie Coochie Men



The Mystics



Gerry & the Dreambenders

Food & Drinks
For Purchase



Tickets

<http://3bands.brownpapertickets.com>

\$20 advance or \$25 at the door



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2017 2:30—8:00 PM

MARDI GRAS EVENT CENTER 615 S. 9TH ST. BOISE, ID 83702