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Submissions for the California Connection can be

**emailed to ca.connection@ccbnet.org.
Non-members are requested and members are invited to pay a yearly subscription fee of \$10 toward the production of THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN.**

If you or a friend would like to remember the California Council of the Blind in your Will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto the California Council of the Blind, a nonprofit charitable organization in California, the sum of \$_____ (or _____) to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons."

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Executive Office for other suggested forms. Thank you.

In accepting material for THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN, priority will be given to articles concerning the activities and policies of the California Council of the Blind and to the experiences and concerns of blind persons. Recommended length is under three pages or 1800 words.

The deadline to submit material for the Winter, 2014 issue of THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN is noon, November 15, 2013.

Please send all address changes to the Executive Office.

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Editor's Page

Judy Wilkinson

In his June E-Forum article, "Will There Ever Be A Unified Organized Blind Movement?", as Mitch Pomerantz neared the end of his presidency, he thoughtfully wrote about whether there ever could (or should) be a single organization of the blind. Perhaps it was that article that got me thinking: or perhaps the sad losses of beloved individuals reported on in this issue, or the strategic planning the Board has been undertaking, or the statements I've been writing for the candidates page, or perhaps my approaching 70th birthday, but I've been thinking of whether the California Council of the

Blind can survive at all? The average age of our members steadily rises. As is usual in most organizations, the 80-20 rule applies: (20% of the people do 80% of the work). And the 20% (and I include myself here) are burning out!

I have been a member of the Council in all its iterations from my UC Berkeley student days in the early 1960's. I have left the organization and returned several times. I left for different reasons: I was personally insulted and humiliated by the president; I felt my talents weren't recognized; too many large fish egos needed to be massaged in this

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little organizational pond; I had other overriding commitments; I was burned out; I was tired.

What follows may seem like a digression, but bear with me. From the time I was a little girl, my mother would listen to the broadcasts from the Metropolitan Opera on Saturday afternoons, brought to us by Texico with the mellifluous voice of the great Milton Cross. I didn't think I was paying much attention, but I must have been. Because when I first had my own apartment as a junior in college and designated Saturday afternoon as cleaning day, I had the vague feeling I was supposed to be doing something. That Saturday afternoon meant what?

It meant tuning in the opera! I told everyone I was "mopping with Milton!" I didn't always listen to the whole performance, but the music was in my bones.

Just like the Council is in my bones. I always came back. Dr. Jacobus tenBroek was always in my head making me feel guilty! From those early days when I defiantly asked him why the hell I should bother wasting my valuable time (time I persuaded myself I was taking away from studying) joining a bunch of old blind fogies at boring meetings! "Because you are supposed to be doing something meaningful for blind people!" (I'm not sure he ever used these words other than in my head.) Because who in

hell do you think you are assuming the things you take for granted were just handed to you? (Um, I learned lots of history.)

I came back this last time in 2009 when we moved permanently back to California. There was just something I was supposed to be doing.

I am beginning to see some of the danger signs: I'm sometimes (no often) angry with President Donna Pomerantz; (to whom this will come as no surprise and for whom let me hasten to add I have enormous respect and who in fact does recognize and utilize my talents and abilities); I hate boring meetings; those big-fish egos; I want to do other things

with my remaining time; I'm burning out; I'm tired. I feel strongly the organization must change or wither away, and at nearly 70, (me not the CCB) I'm panicking about its health. But one thing I know for certain: there will always be a need for some entity like the CCB. It may not, (in fact I think it should not) keep its current form; it may not be recognizable in new transformations. But since we always need to work to enhance the rights of people who are blind or visually-impaired, we will always need some form of the California Council of the Blind. And even if at some point I decide to go away, I will always return. There's just something I'm supposed to be doing.

Approaching One Conference And Convention

Donna Pomerantz

I would like to begin this article with a thank you to all who submitted your statements for our first ever CCB candidates page. Your participation will make this a continued success for years to come!

I am including the conference and convention logistics that have been decided by vote of the CCB board for spring 2014 as not everyone attended the spring 2013 convention.

JW Beginning in fall 2013, the board voted to increase registration fees to \$20. Groups of K-12 students, as well as the adults with them, do not pay registration

fees; college students must pay registration fees.

Now we move to things that begin in spring 2014. The board voted to try this for 3 years allowing me the ability to begin working with the team on contracts through 2016.

First, we will meet in the spring alternating between northern and southern California: (South 2015; North 2016).

Here is the proposed program structure. We will begin with the Rehabilitation Services Committee Meeting Thursday morning from 10 to noon. The CCB board will meet from

noon to 3 or 4. We will offer it as a ticketed plated meal as we do our luncheons.

However, those who do not wish to eat will not be required to sit at the set tables. We will have the regular rows of chairs set up for those not wanting a meal.

The Welcome Party may begin at 4 and the Technology Committee may meet at 5-8 PM or 6-9 PM.

Our exhibit room will open on Friday morning from 9-4:30 PM, giving exhibitors 30 minutes until 5 PM to clean up. On Saturday, the exhibit room hours will be from 9 AM-2 PM. We have been informed that this will make it easier for Exhibitors to participate if we have it timed like this.

There was a proposed change to Credentials: the possibility would be that delegates who have changes to what was submitted would be the only ones required to attend. However, because of great concern about this issue, discussions will continue. The meeting will still be Friday morning at 8.

Friday night programming would mostly be the same and we would end at 9:30 PM sharp. Nominations Committee would start promptly at 10 PM.

Our elections would take place at 1:30 during the Saturday afternoon session. The regular programming would begin at 2:45-4 PM.

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Sunday: 7:30 AM

Devotional Services and from 8:30-12 noon our usual business meeting.

Other Discussion Items

Possibly Credentials and Nominations on Thursday evening

Friday night 7 PM business session and no speaker. Credentials and seating, reports from the ACB representative, the governmental affairs chair and the president.

A question was asked if the program structure is set in stone? One member said maybe clay, then Roger Petersen, 2nd Vice President added some levity and said it was "play dough". This is our way of saying that

the program structure and content are "under construction and in discussions".

I will have various calls within the next month before convention so please continue accessing the California Connection for those announcements, and share with your lady and fellow members when you read call notices on this issue.

In closing, I wish to share another first, I believe. I am pleased to announce that the fall 2013 Conference and Convention theme was written and chosen by a majority vote of our membership who participated in the discussions through our Presidents' List and the Connection. Thank you everyone and see you

very soon!

The Best And Brightest Stars at The National Braille Challenge

Alice McGrath

[Editor's Note: It's been five years since we last published an article on the Braille Challenge: Susan (Shulter) Glass's issue-oriented, award-winning article "Braille For Success: Reflections on the 2009 Northern California Regional Braille Challenge" Summer BC 2009. Her fellow Silicon Valley Council of the Blind chapter member Alice McGrath presents a national perspective from her vantage point as a recently-appointed member of the Braille Challenge Advisory Board.]

In the beginning of

2013, I was honored to be asked to join the Braille Institute's Braille Challenge Advisory Board. The purpose of the Board is to review the procedures and level of difficulty for the tests completed by blind and visually impaired youth during the Preliminary and National Braille Challenge contests. One great perk for joining the Board is I have the opportunity to attend the National Braille Challenge event in June of each year at the Braille Institute in Los Angeles.

I have been

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coordinating the Northern California Regional Braille Challenge since 2006, and I know firsthand the impact the Braille Challenge has had for our local youth who have participated in our events. I was looking forward to learning about the best and brightest who attend the National event to compete in their respective age groups.

The Braille Challenge (r) is an academic competition unlike any other. This two-stage contest is designed to motivate blind students to emphasize their study of braille, while rewarding their success with a fun-filled, but challenging, weekend of events.

I was also excited to cheer on two of our

Northern California Regional participants who earned the honor of participating at the national level. Janie Brunson competed and won third place at the Varsity level and Nikhil Dadlani competed for the first time as a finalist.

Our Advisory Committee is made up of Superintendents of Schools for the Blind, including Stuart Wittenstein, Superintendent of California School for the Blind; and Teachers of the Visually Impaired and others involved in the Braille Challenge from agencies and schools across the country. We had the pleasure of selecting and then meeting the Teacher of the Year, Christine Short. Go to

the web page www.braillechallenge.com to read more about how Christine has impacted the lives of her students through her work and passion for teaching Braille.

The 60 youth and their families started arriving at the hotel in Los Angeles on Thursday so the participants from all over the US and Canada can get acclimated to their surroundings and be ready to compete on Saturday. Many of the participants are repeat national finalists, and I was amazed at their confidence and smiled at their excitement for seeing old friends.

The festivities began on Friday evening with a huge welcome party for the youth and their families. It was

wonderful hearing and seeing the kids let loose on the dance floor as a DJ played all of their favorite current music. There was also a photo booth so friends and families could leave with a picture to remember the Polynesian-themed evening with a memento.

On Saturday morning buses started leaving the hotel at 7:00 AM to take all involved to the Los Angeles headquarters for the Braille Institute. This is the location for the welcoming ceremony and the testing competition. As each bus pulled up to the sidewalk of the Braille Institute, they were met by a large crowd of BIA staff members applauding their arrival

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for the beginning of a day to remember.

I had the chance to speak with several competitors and their parents before the opening ceremony, and I was left with the impression of how each child loves reading in Braille. They talked about the books they have read and the fun they have competing with their friends from all over the country. The opening ceremony began with the University of Southern California Marching Band as they played the opening music while leading the sixty competitors down a red carpet. Each child was introduced and you could feel the excitement in the room reach an all-time high. I was so touched by this

ceremony and thought what an amazing boost to the participants' self-esteem and confidence to be cheered on by hundreds of their families, teachers and other supporters.

The participants went to their respective rooms for the contests and the families and other visitors attended workshops.

That evening, the Awards ceremony was held back at the hotel. It is a gala affair, and the youth and their families attend dressed in their best attire. As the first, second and third place winners are announced in their respective age categories, they come to the stage to be met by the celebrity host, and we hear about their

background. Reading and writing Braille is just one of the passions for these national winners. Many also participate in sports, music and many other endeavors.

The evening closed with a performance by Caitlin Hernandez, a two-time National winner, who sang a song about competing at the Nationals. She was met with a standing ovation after her wonderful performance, and each youth left with a signed

copy of the Cd.

I came home the following day filled with memories of the youth and families I met, along with talented teachers of the visually impaired. The team at the Braille Institute do a fantastic job of coordinating the contest and all of the celebration at the finals. I am looking forward to our 2014 Northern California Braille challenge and to the joy of attending future National competitions.

Blind Californian Survey

Linda Porelle, Chair, Publications Committee

At the spring Conference/Convention, given overall production costs for the Blind Californian, the Board asked the Publications

Committee to explore options to address the pending unavailability of cassettes and the means for duplicating them. While we were

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discussing methods for completing this task, the members of the Publications Committee decided to take the opportunity to broaden the survey to include other BC concerns. We realize the Technical Operations Group has also asked you to complete a survey. Both committees value and sorely need your input.

You can complete the survey in one of two ways.

Submit your email response to Linda Porelle, Publications Committee Chair at linda.porelle@ccbnet.org or by telephone to Bonnie Rennie 714-771-2397 or Susan Glass 408-257-1034.

For those filling out the survey via email, (so

you won't have to keep track of the questions and numbers), look for preliminary announcements around September 1, and the survey itself on one of our CCB lists at the time you receive your copy of the BC.

Submit responses no later than Tuesday, October 10, 2013. We will present a preliminary report at the fall Board meeting.

1. In which format do you currently read the BC? braille, large print, cassette, email, online, Newsline.

2. If it became necessary to dispense with your primary format (other than email or online) which format or formats could you use as an

alternative?

3. Do you currently read the BC? Yes No.

4. If yes, what kinds of articles do you always read? Explain.

5. If yes, do you generally skip certain kinds of articles? Explain.

6. If you don't read the BC what keeps you from doing so?

7. What would make the BC a more relevant publication? Conversely, what keeps the BC from being a more meaningful publication?

8. If the BC went entirely to an email/online or telephone format: how often should it be published? Monthly, every 2 months, quarterly, other?

Patricia La France Wolf: Tributes

Compiled by Judy Wilkinson

[Editor's Note: Pat was delighted that her article "Sugar Dog" about her amazing pet would be published in the most recent Summer, 2013, issue of the BC.]

From: Perry Wolf

**Date: Sun, Jun 9, 2013
at 1:06 PM
Subject: The Life of Pat**

My Dear Friends:

It is with much sadness that I must inform you of the passing of my wife and best friend,

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Patricia La France Wolf. She suffered a very large heart attack on Monday June 3rd, 2013. While all the medical team involved did their best, her injury was just too great to recover from.

Patricia passed away on Wednesday June 5th, 2013 at 6:10 pm. She was surrounded by her loving family and friends including her daughter Lorraine and myself. While it was the most challenging of days, it was also a time for family members and close friends to come together with a singularity of cause. I am proud of our family and of the friends that make up our greater household.

The measure of any person's life is their

positive impact on others. Compared to this standard, Patricia's life rang true and loud with a chorus of appreciation for her part in our lives. Pat touched so many people for so many of the right reasons. I think that is why we can all join in and celebrate this marvelous life that was lived to the fullest, and not think of anything that was lost this week. Patricia may not be with us, but she will never be gone. She will always be the love of my life and I will carry her with me always. I am certain you have a special place in your heart for her as well.

To celebrate this life the family will be holding a memorial very soon. Plans are already in the works. As they progress

I will share the details with you. Until then know that I am touched by the outpouring of love and support that I have received. Be strong in knowing that Patricia lived her life on her own terms right up to the very last moment. May God bless you and keep you as you receive this news.

Sincerely, Perry Wolf

Date: June 7

This is Pam Polagi, President of the San Gabriel Valley Chapter.

It is with much sadness, grief and tremendous loss that I need to inform you that Pat Wolf, a long-time member of the San Gabriel Valley Chapter since approximately 1990, and an even longer time in CCB, has

passed away, due to a massive heart attack and stroke.

Her long-time battle with diabetes, since infancy, has finally got the best of her. Pat has battled diabetes since infancy and received an award for being one of the longest survivors of diabetes, when Pat was 50 years of age. That is a testament to her proactive care, making sure she did the right things for herself, including: eating right, exercise, rest, and remaining active and giving.

She was a definite blessing to CCB, especially her San Gabriel Valley Chapter members. She will definitely be missed, more than I

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know how to say. However, her legacy will live on in the advocacy toward blind persons everywhere. Although Pat became blind later in life, she raised 2 kids and became very active in the blindness community instead of feeling sorry for herself. We're all very proud of her and her accomplishments. ... God Bless.

John Ross

I didn't have the privilege of getting to know Pat, but I did have the privilege of meeting Perry Wolf, who is one of the people I first met when we started up the Bakersfield Chapter in 1999. My thoughts and all prayers for comfort are with you and yours Perry.

Thanks.

Mary Beth Randall

I am really sorry to hear of Pat's death. She was a wonderful lady who endeavored to help out in lots of ways over the many years she was involved in CCB and in her community. Lots of hugs, love, and prayers for Perry and the family.

Richard Rueda

Good morning CCB family. Pat was one of the folks I met before I was heavily involved in CCB. I recall meeting her through various functions in the early 90's through the then Blind Center in Whittier and through other local matters. When I joined CCB in 98 and began attending San Gabriel chapter meetings, it

was her and Perry who I recall standing out and being the great people that they are. Later as a colleague at the Department of Rehabilitation, Pat was always available for advice and discussing things. From serving with her on CCB's Rehabilitation Services Committee and as recent as working with her and Cathy Skivers as one of the three trustees on the Newel Perry Trust, she was someone who could be counted on and trusted.

My heart goes out to Perry and Pat's family and loved ones. She will truly be missed.

Tuan Nguyen,
President, CCB Students

Good Afternoon CCB,
My reflection is that, as

it is still very sad, just well over a week ago, Pat and I had a brief private email communication on the topic of "Organizing Clothes as a Blind Person" which I posted the original thread on the general CCB list. She shared with me about her techniques on how she as a blind lady identified her clothes and how she orderly put her stuff in the closet. She was an amazing, inspirational lady, and she will be missed by many. Rest In Peace, Pat.

Roger Petersen

Donna,

When Pat and I were together on the CCB Board many years ago, it was a running joke that I always wanted to sit next to my favorite

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diabetic so I could get her dessert at dinner. In 1999 at the ACB convention, I received the Durward McDaniel Ambassador award and when I came down from the platform, there was Perry with Pat's dessert for me.

Nellie Emerson

**A slice of life:
Reflections on Patricia
La France-Wolf**

The slice of life Is truly mile high. It includes a collage of accomplishments, relationships and experiences shared with Pat over the thirty four years of our friendship. In Spring of 1979 Pat was a thirty-seven year old mother of two. She was recently blind and newly arrived in California. We met when I visited her at

home at the request of her rehabilitation counselor. The following months were busy with learning Braille, kitchen skills, independent living skills, and counseling. Pat's enthusiasm, humor and determination were infectious. She had a tiny poodle named Candy who was dwarfed by my guide dog Flash.

After our training sessions were completed, Pat and I became friends. We practiced mobility routes at Chaffey College, attended Guide Dog Board meetings and many CCB conventions as roommates. I would describe Pat as being indomitable. She accepted the changes which needed to be

made and launched herself into reinventing her career and life plan. Junior college, Cal State San Bernardino and the Masters program in educational counseling with a certificate in Rehabilitation counseling were achievements accomplished in rapid succession. Pat first joined the Inland Empire Chapter of CCB. She soon after organized the Foothill chapter and later served in various offices in the San Gabriel Valley Chapter.

I recall an incident when we were at a CCB convention in 1991. We both had black lab guide dogs. (Pat had Rudy.) We got into an elevator with a crowd, and the dogs became tangled up. A woman

helped untangle them and handed each of us a leash. We then exited the elevator on our path to breakfast. Pat said, "Hup up! Quit turning around." I told the dog I thought was mine, "Steady, stop pulling so hard!" Upon arriving at the restaurant we both realized what happened and broke into much laughter.

Pat was always there for me with an open mind and a caring heart. Her dedication to any cause she supported was consistent. She especially loved serving on the scholarship committee. After Pat retired from the California Department of Rehabilitation she became busier than ever. These few words are inadequate to

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express the impact Pat had on my life. She gave of her time and love freely. In my heart she will remain my forever friend.

Donna Pomerantz

Good afternoon everyone:

We will all be missing a very fine lady who always had a positive greeting, words of wisdom, and shared many good things with everyone she came in contact with.

Pat was a woman who always did what she wished to do.

I can't imagine being without her, at our meetings, on our calls, or at social functions we attended.

I wanted to think she

would overcome this battle as she had so many others. However, she did not, but I can say those of us who were fortunate to know her in one way or another truly learned from her in some way.

To her family, be strong in this time of sadness and know you were blessed to have had the gift of Pat.

To everyone in the CCB Family reading this note and thinking about Pat, think of your favorite "Pat story" and I hope it brings a smile to your face and warmth to your heart during this very sad time for us while we miss her.

Sincerely with all my respect, thoughts and prayers for all.

Ken Metz

Good afternoon to all of you.

Pat Wolf and I were friends for a long time, over 20 years. We first met at the former ALL conference in about 1993 in Washington, DC, and may have known her even prior to that. At this conference, Pat and I flew back to Chicago together where I was headed back to Los Angeles, and she was going to Indiana or Ohio to retire her guide dog, Rudy, with her sister.

After Pat received her next dog, Max, she and I were both on the CCB Board and attending a Board meeting at the Burbank Airport Hilton. We sat next to each other, and had both dropped our dogs' leashes. You almost

guessed it. We went on a break, and Pat wondered why her dog, who almost always behaved, didn't, and I was wondering why my dog, who I had some issues with, behaved when he usually didn't. After we reconvened at the Board meeting, we realized we had picked up the leashes from each other's dog, and I had Max, and she had Arnold. We had many laughs over that throughout the future years.

When I was diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes in 2006, Pat was right there to give me as much information on Diabetes as possible, and informed me of all the ramifications of Diabetes that I could or wanted to take in.

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In the following years Pat was always willing and able to help on any committees we were involved in regarding guide dog issues. It's interesting that even Pat's last activity at the time of her massive heart attack was working on our 2013 CCB Mutt Strut Committee and was on our weekly call when she lost her fight for life.

Ever since I knew Pat, she was always a person to care and comfort others, always willing to share information she possessed which was a tremendous amount,

and always gave of herself and her time whenever anyone needed her assistance.

Pat will be sorely missed, and I will miss a great friend.

My condolences go to Perry and her children, and to the thousands of persons Pat has helped and cared about over many years.

We will always remember you, Pat, and now you can enjoy yourself as you no longer have any pain, and most important, no longer have Diabetes. Rest in peace, my friend.

Maintain That Connection: Don't Forget Your Phone

Bonnie Rennie

I don't have to tell BC

readers how valuable

their telephone is to them. We depend on our phones for so many kinds of things, both at home and away. This article will focus on a few wonderful sources of social support that are accessible by phone.

Information on the resources below is taken from presentations made at CCB Conference and Convention programs hosted by the Seniors with Vision Loss Committee. Due to space constraints, only brief descriptions of these services are attempted. At the end of this article, you will find separate listings of the phone numbers, and where relevant, the websites, to obtain more information. At this writing, contact

information provided is current. But note that contact material can be subject to change in the case of phone numbers. Though not specifically designed for the blind and visually impaired community, these programs are very friendly to us. They can enhance your quality of life and keep you involved and enriched.

The Friendship Line is a free service of the Institute on Aging in San Francisco. Friendship Line is intended to provide emotional support to seniors in a crisis, or just in need of a listening ear, or referral to local counseling or other resources. Trained, supervised volunteers are available through each day and evening. Crisis

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counselors are on hand 24/7 when you call the toll-free number, nationwide. Those who are lonely, or grieving a loss, or want someone to keep in touch with them can all find understanding and comfort from placing a call.

Senior Center Without Walls has been highlighted before in the BC. It's a free telephone community for people over age 60 in California and is similar to attending a brick and mortar senior center. Groups are facilitated throughout the day, via conference call on a toll-free number. Areas of interest are diverse: discussions on pets, gardening, travel, groups for music or book lovers, writing

workshops, and read-aloud. The schedule will vary throughout the year, but usually includes three separate support groups for those who are blind or who have low vision. I can say from personal experience that this marvelous program is well-run, creative, and highly enjoyable and rewarding.

Many seniors remain active and healthy into their later years. Yet if things begin to change for us, we look for ways to maintain our independence and quality of life, while staying in our homes. To assist in that effort, the Office on Aging has instituted a statewide toll-free number we can call to obtain information and referrals on local

services which may assist us in a variety of supports. It could be learning about Meals on Wheels, sources of transportation or health care including crisis and counseling services, friendly visitors, or telephone reassurance programs, and more. Wherever you live in California, you will get local information by calling the number listed below. Whatever you need to know about, dialing or punching in this number will get you started on the path to help and continued independence.

Finally, I want to say a word about laughter yoga and its availability, even on your phone. At our last convention program, we had a hilarious and

invigorating time, experiencing fun laughter yoga "exercises". Suffice to say that laughter yoga is becoming an increasingly well-thought of and popular way of promoting well-being. All we have to do is observe how children love to laugh, often, with abandon, especially for no reason at all, except that it feels good to laugh. Please note that laughter yoga is not a religious activity, and is not connected to what we commonly picture as physical yoga. It may be ideal to experience laughter yoga by attending one of the many groups held at senior centers, health care centers, or elsewhere. But if you're flexible and open-minded, the benefits of

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this fun activity are still yours on the phone. Because phone numbers may be subject to change, two of many laughter yoga websites are listed here. You can check them or others, for more backgrounds on both the good reasons to laugh and the current contact information. You might be surprised how liberating it is, just to laugh with others.

**Contact Information
Friendship Line: toll-free, 800 971-0016.**

Senior Center Without Walls: To register, request a catalogue, or find out more, Call toll-free, 877 797-7299, Website, www.seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org

Office on Aging, Area

Agency on Aging, local toll-free information and referral number, throughout California: Call 800 510-2020.

Laughter Yoga: It's important to note that the phone numbers are NOT free calls. You must have unlimited long distance calling on your phone plan, or charges will be incurred in calling. Free conference calling services are used, but they are again, not free calls to you. Recorded laughter yoga calls last 20 minutes.

Laughter Yoga by Phone, recorded playback any time: call 712 432-3903, when prompted, enter access code 6071292 and follow additional prompt to listen and laugh along.

For live Laughter yoga by phone, on the hour, several times per day, call 712 432-3100. The current access code must be found at the website below and is subject to change.

For information on laughter yoga in

general and for laughter yoga by phone, visit, www.laughteryogausa.com.

Also for Laughter Yoga in San Diego at Laughter Matters, visit www.laughtermatters.org.

New Services For Blind And Visually Impaired Adults

Nellie Emerson

The Eastside Center For The Blind will be offering independent living services to blind and visually impaired adults in Pico Rivera and surrounding communities at the El Rancho Education Center 9515 Haney Street Pico Rivera 90660.

Classes will begin on Wednesday, September 4, 2013, from 9 a.m. to

2:30 PM. Services are free of charge. People interested in taking classes should contact the center at 310-502-3099.

Classes will include the following: resources, diabetic education, banking, assistance with personal correspondence, individual and family support, reading and writing braille, English as a

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**second language,
advocacy, guest
speakers, braille cards
and other games,
independent living
services and basic**

computer training.

**The volunteer teachers
are retired
professionals in the
field of blindness.**

Easter's Gone to the Dogs!

Olivia Ostergaard

**[Editor's Note: Here is
how Olivia from our
Fresno Chapter
introduces herself:
"Sometimes our Dreams
Do Come True. Ever
since I was in high
school, I fell in love
with writing. I'd revel
over Jane Eyre, Great
Expectations, or The
Miracle Worker. I
wanted to write the
great American love
story. Someday, I just
might do so. I'm an avid
reader of "The Writer".
I recommend this
magazine to anyone
who is interested in**

**writing, whether
freelancing, fiction,
non-fiction, or
technical. I've learned
so much from its pages.
So much so, that I'm
proud to have my first
article published, and
am working on my first
Memoir." Reprinted
with permission from
GDUI Pawtracks,
Summer, 2013.]**

**When we think of
Easter, we usually
picture bunnies,
baskets, eggs, dressing
up for church, and
singing. At least, the**

latter two for me. I've been singing in our church Easter musical for years -- even before I had a guide dog, I'd have my cane, and line up with everyone else. I'd say I've been participating in the Easter Musical for probably more than 50 years. Singing in this event has been an important part of my life.

But, this past Easter, 2013, is one I don't think I'll ever forget. Now, understand, many churches have a Praise /worship Band, with electric guitars, keyboards, and drums. Sometimes, the bass can get a bit loud. So, sometimes I would worry when I had to take my guide, Fenway, on stage. He'd usually just lie there, and

listen. Having Fenway on-stage never seemed out-of-the ordinary to our congregation, because we have a ministry to the Disabled, "More Than Able" for over ten years. We're blessed to have our bulletins on tape, and the Sermon Notes, in Braille. Janine Hults has been spear-heading this effort, and she and her guide, Rosemarie, do a super job.

The last week of rehearsal was going pretty well, but our director was a little concerned about Fenny's getting up and down, when it was time for us to stand Or whenever the booming tympani sounded. I guess the tympani was a little distracting. She asked me if I could

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leave him off-stage at Easter. I could have protested, and taken it to the matt, however, I didn't want to rock the boat. I thought it would be okay, since I could tie him down in the choir room, for first service. During the second, he could stay with my hubby and son. No worries, right? I complied, and tied him to what I thought was the leg of the table, which usually holds treats for us each week.

The congregation was hushed as the music began, and the narrator started reading the "Crucifixion" Story. Chris, the first Soloist, portrayed one of the two thieves. He was singing a beautiful, solemn rendition. When, out of the corner of my eye, I thought I

saw Fenway come bounding in. I was informed later, that he went up to Chris, sniffed him, made a little circle, and came over to where we were standing, flopping himself down. My friend, nudged me, and I looked down to see him. I was "EE! How in the world did you get out?" I thought to myself. "What'd I do wrong?"

I just accepted it, and tried to continue composing my rattled nerves. Needless to say, I kept looking at our director, trying to communicate, "I'm so sorry!"

Between services, we had a wonderful All-Church Brunch. Heidi, one of our Young Marrieds, sat across

from us.

"I'm so embarrassed. I began, apologizing.

"Livvie don't worry about it." Heidi replied. "it was too funny. Fenway just wanted to make a grand entrance. Everyone just laughed."

"Really," I asked, relieved, as I ate a piece of my breakfast quiche.

Just then, our director, sat down next to me. She put an understanding arm around my shoulder. "I am so sorry, Honey. I thought he was tied down on the table. But, I guess it was the chair."

"God sure has a sense of humor. Fenway wanted to be with you,

just like God does with us. It's okay."

"Thanks." Later, one of the older fellas came up to me, and said, "Your dog wanted to sing, too." I just smiled.

My hubby, Jim, and our son, James, came strolling in, and sat down next to me. I proceeded to tell them what happened. "That's hilarious, Mom." James said, laughing. "Too bad I missed it."

Fenny was the talk of the church. After second service, as I was greeting our pastor, he said, "I almost was going to give him the mike, Livvie. No, it was quite funny. Don't worry about it."

Okay, technically, he wasn't supposed to be

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there. but you must admit, he just wanted to be with Mom! Hey, come to think of it, "Dog" backwards is "God". And He guides me, just as much as Fenny does.

Note: Heidi wasn't her real name, so I changed

it, to cover my back!

Look for my Memoir, "Looking At the Unseen: My Guide Dog Journey" this Fall, from Xulon Press. It's my 10-year journey of faith, getting my current guide, Fenway. Don't miss it!

Sheryl Queen

Don Queen

[Editor's Note: I attended a beautiful celebration of Sheryl's life on Saturday afternoon, August 17. A number of members of the CCB family attended. We all received a bookmark with the following quotation from The Wizard of Oz: "A heart is not measured by how much you love but how much you are loved by others."]

Sheryl Elizabeth Queen of El Cerrito, California passed away unexpectedly Thursday, August 1, 2013 when she collapsed during a meeting at work and was taken to Highland Hospital Trauma Center, but efforts to resuscitate her failed.

Age 55, Sheryl was born in 1958 in Berkeley, California. She is

survived by her loving family: her parents, Donald and Mary Socorro Queen of El Cerrito, her sister Marsha Queen of Oakland, and her aunts and Uncles: Kathleen and Alex Salazar of Antioch, Ann and Rudy Salazar of Madison, Wisconsin and Jackie and George Queen of Lancaster, Ohio as well as many nieces and nephews.

Sheryl moved at age four to San Diego where she graduated from Madison High School, specializing in Theater Arts at the Old Globe Theater. She returned to the Bay Area to attend college and begin her 33 year career with the Peralta Community College District, first teaching Word Processing and

typing at Laney College, then joining the Peralta District Office where she was currently working as a Curriculum and Systems Technology Analyst. Also, she was active as a Union steward for Local 1021 SEIU. She volunteered and was active with her parents in the local Alameda County chapter of The California Council of the Blind. She is especially remembered for her assistance in the marathon sessions of the state Resolutions Committee whose efforts did have a material impact on legislation and other programs for the blind. At the national conventions of the American Council of the Blind, she co-managed the large exhibit hall

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with its one-hundred plus exhibitors.

She is remembered by friends and family as a friendly and helpful person. She was an avid Forty-niner and Padres

fan, and enjoyed ocean cruises and her trips to Italy, England, France, Australia and New Zealand, and annual trips to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland.

Technology Grant Opportunity

Jeff Thom

The Inspiration Foundation understands the important role adaptive computer technology plays in a blind or visually impaired person's life. The Inspiration Foundation proudly grants Adaptive Technology Awards to blind and visually impaired individuals who have been denied financial assistance for this expensive technology from federal and state funded

programs.

This year, Inspiration Foundation will award a scholarship of up to \$5,000.00 in adaptive technology to one individual that we feel is the best match for our program.

As of July 15th, we are proud to announce we are currently accepting applications for 2013 Inspiration Foundation

Adaptive Technology

**Award online at:
<http://theiffoundation.org/adaptive-technology-award>**

To be eligible for this scholarship, an individual must be a blind or visually impaired legal resident of California or Arizona, and 18 years of age or older. All information on this application form is strictly confidential and will only be used to

determine your need and ability to inspire independence.

Below are key deadlines for applicants to consider when submitting an application: July 15 Will begin accepting applications online; Nov. 1 - Deadline to receive application. Dec. 15 Announcement of Winner.

ACB 2013 Conference and Convention Report

Donna Pomerantz and Roger Petersen

The fifty-second annual conference and convention of the American Council of the Blind was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Columbus, Ohio, July 5 through 12, 2013. Upon arrival, we had two challenges to surmount.

The first was the hotel, which was the worst one from the point of view of navigation that we have had for a while. Fortunately, this challenge was in large part mitigated by the wonderfully helpful hotel staff, who seemed

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to be everywhere, offering help in getting around. The second challenge, which was especially difficult for seasoned convention goers, was that the convention started one day earlier in the week than usual, and thus everything happened on the wrong day. We all just had to deal with that one in our own ways.

Your authors did not attend everything, which would have been impossible, and there is not room in this article to discuss all those things we did attend. So you will just have to accept our judgment as to the high points, keeping in mind that much of the convention is available in ACB Radio archives and can be studied at whatever

length you desire. Also, one of us, Donna, took extensive notes in the general sessions, more than we could ever use in this article, and she is willing to share these notes with anyone who requests them.

Besides the pre-convention board meeting, Friday, July 5 offered the usual workshop of the Information Access Committee. Chair Brian Charlson gave an extensive report on the activities the committee has undertaken in cooperation with other organizations and industry companies. Then, with ACB Treasurer, Carla Ruschival, he discussed the comparison of special devices such as BrailleNote and mainstream tools like

iPhone.

The highlight of Saturday, July 6, was the evening opening general session, which included the preliminary credentials report and roll-call of delegates and the farewell presidential report from Mitch Pomerantz, who left office at the end of this convention.

From Sunday, July 7 on, we had a general session every morning at 8:30, which we attended, sitting in our chapter delegations with state signs in both braille and large print. These sessions combined ACB business with program speakers and panels. The mix changed as the week went on, with mostly program at the beginning and totally

business on Thursday. Also, the Thursday session did not end at noon, like the others, but continued until all business was done, about 4:00 PM. The afternoons and evenings were taken up by "break-out" sessions that varied from business meetings of special interest affiliates and committees to workshops and receptions.

On Sunday morning, we learned about the first awards to be presented at this convention. Membership awards were presented to the North Dakota Association of the Blind for the greatest percentage growth in membership and to the ACB of Texas for the greatest growth in

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absolute numbers. Next the Board of Publications presented the Ned E Freeman award for excellence in writing to our own Beverly Clifford for her article "Touching Childbirth". We also began to see the wonderful work Margarine Beaman has done at securing sponsorships for the convention. The corporate sponsorships are denoted by gems, diamond, ruby, etc. Vanda Pharmaceutical (the sleep study people) was the biggest corporate sponsor, followed by Google. Individual sponsorships are denoted by precious metals, gold, silver, etc. More than \$100,000 were raised through sponsorships, making it possible to keep the registration for the

convention at an affordable level and still provide excellent programming.

Other external speakers of note included Justin Hughes, Senior Advisor to the Undersecretary of Commerce, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, who congratulated ACB for its part in getting an international copyright treaty which will allow sharing of accessible versions of books across international boundaries; Karen Keninger, Director, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress; Janet LaBreck, Commissioner, Rehabilitation Services Administration, US Dept of Education. We also

welcomed Tom Wlodkowski, vice president of Comcast for accessibility, a blind man who has been in the community for years, formerly with AOL. He assured us that Comcast is working on accessible television.

On Thursday morning, we made history. We had our ACB elections and elected our first woman president, Kim Charlson. We're pretty sure we also made history by electing our first male secretary, Ray Campbell. The officers are now Kim Charlson, Massachusetts, president; Jeff Thom California, first vice president; Marlaina Lieberg Washington, second vice president; Ray Campbell Illinois, secretary and Carla

Ruschival Kentucky, treasurer. Mitch Pomerantz of California is now immediate past president.

Jeff Thom's and Ray Campbell's election as officers left two one-year board vacancies. David Trot and Pat Sheehan were elected to fill these positions.

President Kim announced her appointment of Denise Colley as chair of the Board of Publications. So there was an opening for a one-year term to fill Denise's position; Doug Powell was elected to fill it. Also, Nolan Crab has requested to step down from BOP to focus on other things in his affiliate. Kim appointed Ron Brooks from AZ to fill the vacant position

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left by Nolan.

There will be a list of all resolutions passed elsewhere, but one resolution deserves special comment. Section 14 (c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act allows certain employers to pay less than the minimum wage to certain very severely disabled workers. There has been a campaign lately in the disability community to remove this provision from the law. A resolution to remove Section 14 (c) was introduced and there was a record vote. It passed by 52 to 48%. This is the kind of result that some organizations would never allow to happen.

The ACB Banquet took place Thursday evening with Master of

Ceremonies, Janet Dickelman, our convention coordinator from Minneapolis, MN. Featured speaker was Mary Hiland, former executive director, ACB of Ohio, Columbus, OH, "Take a Walk on the Appalachian Trail" her account of her "hen hike" in a group of twelve women.

More awards were presented by Cindy VanWinkle, Awards Committee chair. The Robert S. Bray award was presented to Weight Watchers Inc. for their accessibility efforts.

The James R. Olsen Distinguished Service Award went to Brian Charlson.

ACB Executive Director, Melanie Brunson, made

a presentation to Sharon Lovering for being on the ACB staff for 20 years.

In closing, we would like to offer one more disclaimer about the impossibility to characterize a convention accurately in an article like this. Please, if you can, plan to attend a national convention. Next year is close by -- Las Vegas! Go!

[Editor's Note: Here is the latest from Janet Dickelman: Our 2014 convention will be in Las Vegas at the Riviera Hotel. Pre-registration pickup will open on Thursday July 10th. Our first tours will be on Friday July 11th. Opening session will be on Sunday July 13. Our Banquet will be on Friday July 18 and our final tours on the 19th.]

Who Can Provide What Health Services: Developments in a Changing Landscape, Part I

Steven Mendelsohn

[Editor's Note: In miswd August, Jeff Thom sent a press release from DREDF about a state Supreme Court decision allowing insulin to be injected to school children with diabetes by non nurses .

Knowing how busy Jeff was, I asked my husband Steve if he could write a few explanatory words suggesting why this decision might be of interest to blind people. (He's incredibly busy

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too, but when I need an article, well he finds it politically expedient to oblige.) But then I must face the consequences: all 2,800 words of them. No one gets to write that many words without good reason! I was ready to get out my metaphorical axe but decided to ask my often-wordy spouse to cut so I wouldn't inadvertently chop useful stuff. He explained that once he got started, he really felt it was important to present the big picture: not just how the law might impact all of us, but how it connects to the important issues of the new health care initiative and longterm care. The article also shows how a court chooses what to decide and what not to and why that means that

the law is sometimes clear and sometimes not, and how decisions have unexpected implications and consequences. In other words, he wanted to show us how the sausage is made. Above all no simple few-word intro! In all seriousness, despite his relationship to me and what that suggests about space he sometimes receives in this publication, I felt that the entire complex picture needed to be put before our readers. And quite frankly, I know of no one more of an expert to do it than Steve. Reading this article isn't easy. But I hope you'll find it was worth it.]

Many BC readers will be familiar with the effort that took place in Sacramento this year to

pass legislation expanding the permissible scope of optometrists' practice. Some may also be aware of proposals to broaden the role of nurse practitioners and to increase the responsibilities of certain pharmacists.

The history of medicine in this country is partly a story of the ongoing competition for turf among health care disciplines and between specialties within the medical profession. That competition has heated up noticeably this year because of the Affordable Care Act.

Operating in our state through the new Covered California health insurance exchange, and through an expansion of

financial eligibility for Medi-Cal, the Affordable Care Act (more widely known as Obamacare) will result in millions more people having access to health care. That will create new customers for many health care providers but will also place unprecedented demands on health care system resources. There probably aren't enough primary care doctors around to give everyone the convenience and speed of access and the level of attention we would hope, and some specialties may come under similar supply-and-demand pressures. So the state is looking into how to provide quality care to the new people who will be able to afford it, and various health care disciplines

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are trying to help meet the need.

Opponents of Obamacare have long complained that it will cause physician shortages. Since those opponents are mostly people who already have, or who think they have, good health insurance, what they mean is that more people will have access to what they have. But leaving aside the arguable selfishness of such critics, the reality is that there will be problems, particularly with Medi-Cal where the state's planned 10% fee cut to doctors and other practitioners will cause some to opt out of the Medi-Cal program.

Under such circumstances, expansion of the roles

and responsibilities of various medical specialties and non-physician health care disciplines seems sensible. But such arguments always run up against concerns about quality and expertise. These issues are well beyond the scope of this article, but it is important to acquaint you with some recent developments that may have long-term cost, supply and quality implications for many services, including some that you consider health care (and some that you may not) in the months and years to come.

The competition over who can provide what service or perform which procedures has taken a new turn. Not connected with

Obamacare but as the culmination of a case that has been making its way through the courts for 7 years, the state Supreme Court on August 12th issued an important decision concerning who can administer insulin to students with diabetes in schools. The court decided that the law did not require that these injections be administered only by nurses but could be given by volunteer, trained school personnel who were not certified or licensed health care workers.

In the wake of this decision, issues are likely to arise in other settings about what services normally thought-of as health care or quasi-health care services must be

provided only by licensed health workers and what services can be provided by laypeople. Services likely to come into question in this light include the administration of various kinds of medication, especially by injection, the taking of various tests and the collection of samples and data, the monitoring and maintenance of remote e-health technology, and the adjustment of wheelchair seating systems and other mobility devices. For people who are blind, and who could and would perform many of these functions independently if they were accessible by nonvisual means, these questions have important implications

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for the cost and availability of a wide range of services and life options.

Where laypeople are allowed to perform various procedures, provide services or administer medication or other treatments, questions will also arise as to the level of training and the kinds of supervision these providers will require. Settings where these questions are likely to arise include nursing homes, the in-home supportive services program (IHSS), and even the income tax law (where the characterization of a service as "quasimedical" or "nonmedical" will determine its deductibility).

As the demand for health care services and for long-term services and supports (LTSS) grows, and as the imperatives of cost reduction increase in tandem with this demand, these questions of jurisdiction, training and supervision will more and more often determine the availability or affordability of needed services.

Against this backdrop, the court decision and the court's reasoning are worth our attention. How did the court reach its decision, and how generalizable is the court's decision to other treatments or other settings?

The case is American Nurses Association v.

Torlakson. The case began in 2005 when several families brought a federal court class action lawsuit against two school districts, alleging violation of the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Idea) and alleging violation of Sec. 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act. The alleged violations consisted of failing to make insulin injections available to students with diabetes who needed them during the school day, thus depriving them of their right to a "free and appropriate public education". A settlement was reached in 2007 in which the defendant school districts and the state essentially committed themselves to taking action necessary to see

to it that the students' rights were respected, and one result of this settlement was the California Department of Education's issuance (after releasing several confusing guidances and opinions on the issue in the prior two years) of a legal advisory clarifying that trained, volunteer school personnel were legally authorized to administer insulin injections when nurses were not available.

A nurses' professional association challenged this legal advisory in court with a lawsuit of its own, arguing that the advisory was in violation of state law, and that even if not in violation of state law, that it had been improperly adopted through the use of a

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flawed administrative procedure.

The Association's most substantial argument was that the advisory violated the California Nurse Practice Act (NPA). In the view of the Association, the NPA defined the administering of injections, including insulin injections, as the practice of nursing, and therefore required that only qualified and properly licensed nurses could legally administer such injections. Put another way, if only nurses were allowed to give such injections, then school personnel, by giving them, were acting as nurses in violation of the law.

The lower courts (first the Superior Court in

which the case was tried and then the Court of Appeal to which the decision was first brought for review) ruled in favor of the nurses (although each gave different reasons).

The case was then appealed to our state's highest court. Normally, the state Supreme Court in reviewing lower court decisions is charged with deciding whether the lower court has made a mistake, whether it has committed what is termed reversible error. This is often a narrower question than who is right or wrong or what should the decision have been, because there may be situations in which an appeals court must say: well, we wouldn't have

reached that decision ourselves, but because we can't say that what the lower court decided is clearly wrong, we're not justified in overturning its judgment. However, in this case, because of the particular procedure through which the case came to the Supreme Court, the judges reviewed the case "de novo," meaning the Supreme Court was free to take a completely fresh, new look at the case and decide, as if it were the first court hearing so case, what the outcome should be. And the unanimously reached outcome was that school personnel other than nurses were legally permitted to administer insulin injections to students with diabetes.

Although oral medications have become more common, we probably all still know people, often including children, who self-inject insulin on a daily basis or who are assisted in doing so by family or friends. If using injectable insulin required the presence or participation of a licensed nurse, the entire nature of diabetes management in this country would have to change. Versions of the drug would have to be developed that require injections far less often than daily. But given current diabetes management protocols, there wouldn't be anywhere near enough nurses to meet the need, and the costs of insulin treatment would likely become

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prohibitive. That is the problem in schools, and if insulin administration were restricted to nurses, students would face serious obstacles in going to school.

These are the sorts of points that someone arguing for the rights of the students or for the expanded role of school employees would typically advance. Other public policy or medical arguments might likewise be advanced on behalf of broadened access, and a number of policy arguments could fairly

be marshalled on the side of the nurses as well. But the court's decision addresses none of these issues directly. Rather, it deals with legal issues, issues that are frankly quite esoteric for nonlawyers, issues that are of what we would call a technical nature, but it is often on the basis of just such considerations that pivotal public concerns hinge.

So what did the Supreme Court decide? [To be continued in Part 2.]

CCB Officers And Directors 2013

[Editor's note: We are indebted to Bernice Kandarian who updates and corrects the list of CCB officers and board members, including the

number of the term each is presently serving, the year elected to that term and the year next up for election. Terms actually

begin on January 1 following election. The presence of an asterisk means that the individual served a partial term before the first full term.]

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