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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 Fall, 2013 issue of THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN is noon, August 15, 2013.

Please send all address changes to the Executive Office.

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From The Editor's Desk

Judy Wilkinson

As I begin my fourth year as editor of the BC, I present material from Judy's Manual for Success. I'll share two parts: How to get the floor (at a conference/convention) or a place in the queue in a phone conference. Part 2: What to do when you're angry with the CCB (substitute the name of any organization with which you are involved.)

At the Sunday morning session of the spring convention, we were involved in a heated debate over two resolutions about the California Guide Dog Board. There were "point of order" "point of clarification" "Question" "Madam

President" from all parts of the room. I heard mutterings all around me with the gist of "I'd like to talk." "I wonder what's going on." "What do I do to get a mic?" To many of us the answers to these questions seem perhaps obvious and simple. But many of our fellow members are confused, afraid, shy or all of the above. In the interest of public service (and to get more members to participate from the floor or in conference telephone calls), I offer the following simple guide.

The most important thing to remember is YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEEK THE FLOOR! I thought about delving

into Robert's Rules of Order or at the very least checking with our parliamentarian Roger Petersen, but then I realized it's a lot simpler than that.

Rule 2: You'll always be ok if you are courteous and follow some very simple guidelines.

Stand up! (This not only expands your lungs for the next part but has other advantages which I'll mention soon!) Now in your biggest playground or outdoor voice (I use my "teacher's" voice), say these 4 words: "Madam President Judy Wilkinson!" Substitute when appropriate "Mr." followed by appropriate title. If in your excitement you forget the title of the presiding officer, it's always ok to say, "Mr. [or Madam]

Chair!" Never forget to say your name.

If you don't know if you want a point of information or point of order, just say, "Madam President, Judy Wilkinson, question?" You don't need special lingo to get recognized.

Here's the thing, (and I've seen all our presiding officers do this), there may be 10 voices clamoring for recognition: but THEY HEAR YOU!

Keep standing! If for some reason the presiding officer forgets you, the mic runner will usually whisper: (Think Ed on his roller skates here) "Donna, 3 people are still standing." If for any reason you are unable to stand, your lungs may be more squashed so you'll have

to compensate! Also you may need to wave your arms in the air. (The blind presiding officers won't see this, but the mic runner will and at the very least, you may feel a lot better.)

The presiding officer may not recognize your voice: (see the advantage of giving your name?) Believe me, very soon she will! She may say, "I heard a lady at the back!" Say your name if you think it's you. She may say, "No Judy, someone was ahead of you but I'll get back to you." Or the mic runner may place the device in your hand and you'll know you're next after the current speaker. Speaking of the mic, you'll notice that often the person who speaks already has a mic! Where did she

get it? Well often a standing mic (or two) are in the middle aisle: often near the front. If, while someone is talking, you know you'll want to speak, you can begin moving toward an aisle, but that isn't necessary since the mic can come to you.

It's ok to be a little persistent: a little! The presiding officer in exasperation may eventually say, "Okay Judy! I hear you!" But generally stay standing and be patient. If someone makes your point before you are recognized, just sit down. If you are called on anyway, just say someone has already read your mind. You may feel you have the perfect way to make a point, (certainly better than the person who stated it anyway), but if

someone has really made the point you're after, try not to repeat what's been said.

Sometimes the world is cruel. The presiding officer may end debate. Another sequence may make your point irrelevant.

There's some things that I don't like about how things proceed on the floor. For example, during Sunday's session, Frank Welte was trying to compose different scenarios for an amendment: very hard to do. Mitch Pomerantz opined that he doesn't like "word smithing from the floor". Who does? When one of my students struggled with stating a thought aloud, I'd often say, "Let me give you a moment to think while I go on to someone else,

but I'll get back to you." Often that's all a person needs rather than having to think about complex language on the fly.

And you know what? Sometimes what happens on the floor isn't fair: sometimes. I remember once when the presiding officer forgot to remind us about the 20-minute debate rule until the first speaker had already taken up seven minutes. Sometimes someone calls for the question (meaning an immediate vote) before I think all valid points have been made. And while 25 members can ask for reconsideration of almost any floor action, how realistic is it for one to find out if that many people agree with you? So ask! "Mr. Chair: could we see if

25 folks want to consider such-and-such?" Remember the presiding officer is reasonable. I once witnessed Gene Lozano reverse himself when he realized a number of people were unhappy. He didn't bother to see if there were in fact 25 unhappy folks. His ego wasn't so big that he had to have his way.

Here's the worst thing that could happen and nothing is fatal! You may be told your point is out-of-order. The audience may giggle (having forgotten perhaps what it's like to

think on one's feet). The presiding officer may have been unfair: this time. You may not be allowed a chance to speak: this time! But you know what? You asked for the floor! You probably had your say! You actively participated in what we point to when we talk about the democracy of this organization. Who said democracy was always fair? But it sure beats any of the alternatives (think marching in lock step to orders from on high).

New Things on The Horizon

Donna Pomerantz

There are some new things on the horizon for the CCB! What a start to this President's

Message! Be sure to read through to the end. From all accounts taken from those who

submitted their Conference and Convention surveys, the majority of things went well and were enjoyable with many opportunities to learn new things and be a part of sessions that made one think. We accomplished a great deal and are moving ahead in the direction you have given us.

By the time you read this, the CCB Board will have completed their day-long in-person session regarding our organizational assessment and strategic plan. It is our hope that much good will come from this with identified goals and a road map assisting us in the achievement of those goals. I wish to thank those who completed the survey tool sent out on our

Presidents' and Board Lists. Your contributions assisted in the organizational assessment and strategic plan.

Now onto another first this year. I have heard from a number of members, before I became your President and during my Presidency. You, the membership wish to learn more about the people who are running for office in the California Council of the Blind. My partial answer to that request is the CCB will have a Candidates' Page on our website where you can learn about them through their writings. Now before you say, "I don't have a computer and I want to read the statements," hang on. If you wish to read the writings of our

candidates, contact the CCB Office and ask for the statements in email. That would be the most expedient way to receive them. If you don't have email, please ask for an alternate format and we will get it out to you. Potential candidates: the answer to each of the four questions must be 300 words or less; that count will be determined by the word-count feature in MS Word on a PC. Entries for each answer will terminate at the end of the sentence containing the 300th word and there will be no editing, spell checks or grammar checks done. We will take them as you submit them.

I wish to thank the ACB for putting my thoughts into the perfect questions without even

talking to each other about it. In all honesty, I had three of the concepts in my thoughts, and I believe question four is a strong addition to give CCB candidates the ability to express themselves with what they feel is most important. The deadline for submission of your statements is August 13, 2013. We will not accept any statements after that date! You will need to submit them to the office in electronic format as a .txt .rtf or MS Word file. Email them to ccotb@ccbnet.org no later than August 13, 2013. The four questions are as follows:

1. What office are you seeking, and what are your qualifications?

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2. What would you do to strengthen the relationship between the CCB leadership and state and special-interest affiliates?

3. In light of the current national economic crisis, how can long-term financial stability be achieved for CCB?

4. List three issues you plan to work on should you be elected and how you plan to effect change in those three areas.

I wish to close this message by saying that this candidates' page is for those who came out of the Nominations Committee and those CCB members in good standing according to

our official database who wish to run from the floor at our Fall 2013 Conference and Convention. I know some will have very strong feelings about this action; however now that we are moving to one Conference and Convention a year, we must provide multiple opportunities for those who wish to run for office to make themselves known to all of us. And we too must have the ability to vote from multiple points of knowledge. The Candidates' Webpage will go live approximately September 5, 2013.

Blind Californian Awards

Linda Porelle, Chair, Publications Committee

Each year since 1998 at our spring conference and convention banquet, The Publications Committee presents awards in two categories to writers who have submitted articles for The Blind Californian during the previous year. In 2012, the BC had submissions from a record high nine first-time writers, two of whom were recognized with this year's honors. In my role as recently-appointed chair of the Publications Committee, I had the happy responsibility of overseeing the voting process for this year's awards. Members of the Publications Committee were invited to rank their votes: 3 points to

their first, down to 1 for their third choice. Both winners were selected from the Fall 2012 issue and are highly recommended for anyone who might want to revisit some recent issues.

In the issue-oriented category, there were six nominees. The winner was Susan Kitazawa, a member of the San Francisco Chapter. Susan's article, entitled *Delighting in Our Differences*, discussed her recent experiences with vision loss and her entrance into the blindness and low vision community. She included some thought-provoking comparisons with her earlier life experiences as a

woman and member of a minority group. Since Susan was unable to be in Sacramento for the presentation, I had the pleasure of presenting the award at our San Francisco Chapter meeting on Saturday, April 22.

In the lifestyle category, there were seven nominees. The winner was Beverly Clifford, a member of the Silicon Valley Chapter. Bev's article, entitled Touching Childbirth, recounts her deeply personal experience as a hands-on participant in her daughter's labor and delivery of Bev's granddaughter. And I do mean hands on here. Her daughter's obstetrician, in an act of amazing generosity and trust, invited and assisted Bev in

“catching the baby” as she was delivered.

Bev was present to receive her award at the banquet.

These awards were created to encourage members of CCB to showcase their writing talents with the CCB community. When appropriate, we do accept material that has been published elsewhere. In addition, our gifted editor, Judy Wilkinson, is ready and willing to provide editorial assistance when needed.

Although financial constraints have necessitated a reduction in size for The Blind Californian, there is still room for anyone who is inspired to share meaningful observations and

experiences.

Spring 2013 CCB Conference Report: "Back to The Basics: Support, Advocacy,"

by Alice McGrath and Cam Acker

[Editor's Note: Once again we are indebted to the delegate and alternate delegate from the Silicon Valley Council of The Blind for our conference/convention report. The delegate and alternate are required to submit a written report for the Chapter's fine newsletter "In Touch". If you'd like to see how one of our largest and most successful chapters keeps in touch with its members with a fine monthly newsletter, you can ask to be put on the email list by sending an email to

membership@svcb.cc. Remember, at some point in the next few months, you can download and listen to most sessions from the conference/convention or order cassettes from the office.]

SACRAMENTO, APRIL 11 TO 14, 2013

Alice and Cam were our chosen delegates for the Spring Convention, and by reviewing the program before the convention, they knew that they would be able to cover most of the meetings. This was Cam's first time as an alternate delegate, and she embarked on her

responsibility in her typical, thorough manner. This report reflects both their comments and their gained insights. [However,] they cannot include an update on every meeting they attended....

Cam was most interested in attending the meetings related to access and transportation. We both attended the Friday morning session conducted by the Committee on Access and Transportation (CAT), and California Council of Citizens with Low Vision (CCCLV), and the program was packed with information. It began with a report from Mitch Pomerantz, President of ACB, titled "Update on Accessible Prescription Drug Labeling Efforts

After Passage of the FDA Safety and Innovation Act." The need to be able to read the information on drug containers is a high priority. The prescription drug container labels need to be safe, consistent, and reliable for all the blind and visually impaired. ACB's efforts commenced in 2011 and resulted in the introduction of legislation which was ultimately incorporated into S 3187, The Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation

Act. The bill was passed by Congress and signed into law by the President on July 9th, 2012, becoming P.L. 112-144.

What has come out of

ACB's successful advocacy effort is the Work Group on Access to Prescription Drug Label Information, under the auspices of the United States Access Board. Mitch advised that the work group is united in its task to make the labeling available in all formats, including large print, braille, and audio formats. This is a critical issue, and we will continue to hear of progress. The WalMart organization has developed a label reading program and is using an RX Drug labeling system--ScripTalk.... We are encouraged to be proactive and ask for the use of such devices.

The second part of the meeting gave us an update on the high-speed rail project, titled

"California High-Speed Rail--Easing Access While Ensuring Worker and Passenger Safety"; Jon Tapping, Risk Manager, California High-Speed Rail Authority. The first step will take place from Fresno to Bakersfield. The proposed trains will be traveling at speeds up to 220 mph, up and down the California corridor from southern California through the California central valley, onto the San Francisco peninsula, and ending up in San Jose. Many CCB members with experience advocating for stations accessible to blind and low vision travelers offered their expertise, and the speaker invited them to contact him for input; this was a great benefit of the presentation. As Frank Welte mentioned, it is far easier and less

expensive to taxpayers when the blind are involved in planning, rather than advocacy after stations are built.

We also heard from a panel of elevator representatives about the future of destination elevators. The technology has been in the planning stage for years, with the desired outcome to build "smart elevators" which dispatch cars based on riders selecting their desired floor. The panel is working on accessibility features, including a button that signals that someone with a disability is boarding, and the person can then listen to an audio prompt to select their floor. The elevator car will either appear immediately to the left or right of the call button. It will be

fun and interesting to go to a convention and see the "smart elevators" at work during one of our future conferences!

Technology is always a topic of interest at the convention. The Thursday afternoon session, coordinated by the Technology committee, included a demonstration of a software program called Guide from Dolphin Oceanic. Mark Gibbons from Sterling Adaptive demonstrated this program, which is designed to make it easy for those who do not have computer experience to perform essential tasks on a PC. The menu is simple and the choices are number driven, all with speech prompts. Users do not need to learn or memorize key strokes,

but rather can simply select the numbered task (including send an email, create a document, create a contact, and more). It is a very useful program for someone who has experienced vision loss but does not have any experience with computers. We also heard from Pete DeVasto, Accessibility Manager at Adobe. Pete reviewed what Adobe is doing to make PDF files more accessible.

The CCB Students also offered a program on Smart Phone tips and tricks. We heard from blind users of both the iPhone and the Android Smart Phones, and both speakers shared what they have learned plus a few tips about Applications.

Those who love to read

have many opportunities to learn and share with fellow avid readers at our conferences. Representatives from the Braille and Talking Book Library spoke about what is new and of interest, especially for those with low vision. Rob Turner gave a few presentations to different audiences about what is new at Bookshare. We also got an opportunity to share what we are reading at the combined luncheon of the California Library Users and the Braille Revival League.

The General Sessions included business that addresses the upcoming change to one conference per year. We heard and voted on several simple changes to the Bylaws and Constitution to reflect

this upcoming change. The General Sessions also included a few interesting speakers. We learned about social Security, and also received information about financing a new home on a limited income.

We also heard about the Gift of Life, an organ and tissue donation program. We heard two moving stories. The first was from the perspective of a mother, about her family's journey when they decided to donate the organs of her teenage son, who had died in an auto accident. The second was from an organ transplant recipient, Sandy Nelson, one of our CCB members. The program made us think about the need to consider this gift of life.

Cam was interested in learning about the process of electing to travel with a guide dog. She attended the Guide Dog Users meeting and luncheon and was able to chat with fellow guide dog teams and with representatives from the various guide dog schools.

The banquet was a highlight, especially for one of our chapter members, Bev Clifford. Bev and [her husband] Victor came up for the day on Saturday, and Bev was presented with an award from the Publications Committee for her article about being present for her grandchild's birth. She was surprised and honored. Frank Welte, Master of Ceremonies, [president of the San Francisco Chapter] conducted a fun trivia

game.

The CCB conference is a mix of business, information sharing, and exploring the exhibits, as well as visiting with old and new friends....

We are transitioning as

a body of people with a common cause, and change will help us to grow and become even stronger as a unit and as individuals. You may want to consider being a delegate at the fall conference in San Diego.

Sugar Dog

Patricia Lafrance-Wolf

[Editor's Note: Patricia, a member of the San Gabriel Valley Chapter, tells us, "I have been a type 1 diabetic for over 68 years; since the age of 22 months old. I have been blind since 1977 due to the diabetes. I joined CCB in 1988 and helped start two different chapters."]

Three years ago I went to the local dog pound

expecting to get an average Labrador mix. (I had been without a guide dog for 2 years because my health would not permit me to use a guide successfully.)

My daughter and I went to the local dog pound and looked over the hundred or so dogs available. I chose 3 to look at, but ended up

considering only one: Delilah, a female lab/shepherd/chow mix. She was not only a very pretty dog with a lab face, pointed ears like a shepherd and the black tongue of a chow, but she was not barking like most of the other big dogs. This is a quality I very much appreciate.

After bringing her home, she did the typical puppy behavior of a one-year-old dog. She chewed up my hearing aid, made lunch of a remote control for the bedroom lights and swallowed a number of pages of my husband's 100-year-old dictionary. Perry was screaming I should take her back! But, I just "knew" she was going to be a good dog. All our previous dogs had been full-grown trained guides,

and we never had gone through all that puppy behavior. I convinced Perry she would eventually grow out of it especially if we kept up the training.

As time passed and she grew up and quit the chewing, we realized she was a very smart dog. Perry began training her to obey such commands as "forward," "left," and "right". We thought she might become a promising guide dog. Then something amazing happened. She suddenly began "alert" signaling.

Perry was out in the garage building something when she came out and stood between him and his hammer. As you remember, one of the reasons I chose her was

because she rarely barks, but she started yelping up a storm at him. Perry laughed and said to our visiting friend, "Look, Will fell in the well behind the barn." But Delilah kept barking, so he followed her into the living room. He found me almost unconscious from low blood sugar.

That may have been a fluke, so we did not think much of it. But a few months later, on the 4th of July, she ran out barking to my husband again. He came into the living room where a girlfriend and I were watching TV. My friend knew there was something wrong but did not know what to do. I was completely out. He ended up calling 911.

Delilah has "alerted"

several times since then about impending low blood sugars. The last time was last week while I was exercising at the rehabilitation facility trying to overcome a back problem. She came up to me and started licking my hand. At that moment, I realized my sugar was dropping and I needed some help.

This wonderful dog was apparently born with the ability to recognize the change in some body odor when a diabetic becomes "low". Many dogs are taught to alert to this kind of blood sugar low by a special school located in Northern California, and these dogs are especially trained to work with children. We just lucked out finding this "baby" at our local pound.

Summaries of Board Meetings of The California Council of The Blind

Gabe Griffith, Secretary

November 1 2012 Pre-Convention Board Meeting

After the meeting was called to order there was a roll call. Present were President Donna Pomerantz, 1st Vice President Gene Lozano, 2nd Vice President Roger Petersen, Secretary Gabe Griffith, Treasurer Peter Pardini, Immediate Past President Jeff Thom, Board members Ardis Bazyn, Vince Calderon, Leena Dawes, David Hanlon, Linda Porelle, Robert Wendt and Judy Wilkinson. David Jackson and Erik Smiley were absent.

The board went in to executive session to

discuss Mutt Strut items.

The rest of the agenda was read and approved with one modification.

There was a motion to approve minutes from April and May. The motion passed.

There was a treasurer's report covering an account balance, balance sheet, income and expenses, income and expense comparison from the previous year. The treasurer's report was approved. The 2011 audit has also been completed.

Next the board discussed Mutt Strut

including income and expenses from the three regions. Total budgeted income was \$47,000, actual taken in \$1,8215, actual budgeted expenses were \$20,225. Actual expenses \$6,952. Difference between income and expenses \$11,263.

Donna read the Newel Perry Trust Fund report. As of October 31 2012, the total in this account was \$189,794. The report was accepted.

Next was the Ellen Murphy Trust Fund report. The current balance was \$248,560.97 and they have helped 9 people so far in 2012. This report was accepted.

There is still a plan to conduct a strategic plan for CCB. The board will probably meet for this

purpose after the spring 2013 convention.

There was public comment on topics such as conventions, the strategic plan, meals, and transportation.

The meeting adjourned at this point.

Fall 2012 CCB Business Meeting

The business portion of the convention started on Friday night with Pam Polagi giving the CCB Credentials report. There were 8 chapters not seated. The Credentials report was accepted unanimously.

Next on Friday evening were the elections. The results were Donna Pomerantz for President, Gene Lozano

for 1st Vice President, Peter Pardini as Treasurer, and Vince Calderon, Leena Dawes, David Hanlon, and David Jackson as board members.

The business on Saturday got started with a second reading of the two articles of the Constitution that would be primarily amended to go to one convention a year. There were several questions and several arguments for both sides. After much debate, it was moved and seconded to adopt the Constitutional Amendment. The motion passed on a voice vote.

Next was a Mutt strut report. Peter Pardini gave financial information regarding income and expenses

for the three regions involved in Mutt Strut. These three regions for 2012 were Los Angeles, Sacramento, and San Francisco. Total profits as of this meeting were \$11,263.

Sunday morning began with Gabe Griffith reading the business meeting minutes from Spring 2012. The minutes were passed with slight modifications.

Peter Pardini then gave a treasurer's report. Included in the figures he gave was the estimation that CCB would probably finish 2012 with a net financial loss. The treasurer's report was accepted.

Peter then gave some of the numbers that resulted from the 2011

audit. The audit report was approved.

Next was the final Constitution report for this meeting. Gabe Griffith thanked everyone for a good discussion on Saturday and reported that the committee would be busy preparing a report for all the other changes that would need to be made to the Constitution. The Constitution And Bylaws Committee report was accepted.

Jeff Thom gave the reading of the Fall 2012 resolutions. A report of these resolutions and their results should have already appeared in this magazine.

The meeting finished with several other committee reports and announcements.

January 22nd 2013 CCB Board of Directors Conference Call

After calling to order there was a roll call. Present were President Donna Pomerantz, 1st Vice President Gene Lozano, 2nd Vice President Roger Petersen, Secretary Gabe Griffith, Treasurer Peter Pardini, Immediate Past President Jeff Thom, Board members Ardis Bazyn, Vince Calderon, Leena Dawes, David Hanlon, David Jackson, Linda Porelle, Erik Smiley, Robert Wendt, and Judy Wilkinson.

There was a discussion regarding a new copier for the CCB office. It was approved for Donna and Peter to move forward with signing a

lease for a new copier.

It was decided that the board would meet for the strategic plan in Sacramento either in May or June.

At this point the board discussed the four regional proposals for Mutt Strut. There were some discrepancies among the four proposals that the board agreed would need to be corrected. Donna brought the four

regional chairs on to the call individually to discuss their region's proposals. There was much discussion back and forth between the board and the chairs. Afterwards the board discussed the proposals and ended up approving three regions. The three regions will be Sacramento, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

After the Mutt Strut discussion the meeting was adjourned.

CCB Membership Seminar, And Chapter Awards, Spring 2013

Ardis Bazyn, CCB Membership Chair

On Saturday, April 13, at our Spring CCB conference and convention, the CCB Membership Committee held a membership

seminar breakfast meeting. We chose the topic, "How to create team-work to improve productivity in your chapter/affiliate." We

wanted a discussion on conflict resolution and working together to improve each of our

chapters and statewide affiliates. We posed the question, "How did you resolve a conflict or disagreement in your chapter?" The discussion and comments were appreciated by all. The following list of suggestions were recommended, some gathered from Internet sources and some from participants at this session. We hope all of you can benefit from them.

- Building Good Relationships
- Be direct and totally honest.
- Quality communication is necessary.
- Listen actively to all

sides of an issue.

- Understand others' expectations.
- Reciprocity is expected.
- Respect others' opinions.
- Realize that everyone has different values.
- Ask questions when controversy arises.
- Ask why others feel differently.
- Negotiation is necessary to be successful.
- Listen without judgment when people speak.
- Be willing to compromise.
- Agree that disagreement is ok.
- If there is a conflict or disagreement, elect someone to mediate.
- When decisions are made, move forward without reservation.
- Voting is important and members need to consider the best

person for the job (whether they are able to do the job).

CCB Membership Awards

The 2013 CCB Membership Incentive Awards were announced at the banquet at the CCB Spring Convention in Sacramento. The winners this year were the Solano County Chapter for the largest percentage of growth and The Glendale-Burbank Area Chapter had the highest number of new members. Congratulations! Win one of the CCB Membership Incentive Awards in 2014! These awards are presented at every CCB Spring Convention to the CCB chapters or affiliates having the highest membership increase

between the previous and current Spring Conventions. One award is for the highest number of members increased and the second award is for the largest percentage increase in membership. We encourage all chapters and affiliates to work on building their membership count.

Is your chapter currently working on a project that will benefit your community? The Chapter of the Year Award is presented by the CCB Membership Committee at each Spring CCB Convention. This award is presented to the CCB chapter that conducts a group effort to make a significant difference in the life of an individual and/or the community. The Chapter of the Year award is

given to the chapter with the best overall chapter project for the previous year. We will be accepting letters from chapters for projects developed and completed in 2013. Please submit letters to the CCB state office by February 15, 2014. In the letter, please explain the group chapter project, who

benefited from the effort, and the time-line of the project. We would like to be able to present this award in 2014, provided we receive letters from chapters. We have not had nominations for this award for several years now. Let's make 2014 different.

Resolutions Summaries

Jeff Thom

What follows is a summary of the resolutions that were adopted at the Spring 2013 CCB Conference and Convention. Resolutions 2013A-1 and 2013A-4, which related to the State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind, were tabled, pending future action.

Resolution 2013A-2 requires that the organization oppose any legislation that would permit the use of "cycle tracks" unless and until the pedestrian safety concerns in this resolution are adequately addressed. Note: a cycle track is essentially a bicycle lane that is placed

between the curb and where cars are allowed to park, using a design in which cars must park a prescribed distance away from the curb in order to make room for the bicycle lane.

Resolution 2013A-3 urges Guide Dogs for the Blind to return to its previous training practices in regards to its puppy raising and guide training.

Resolution 2013A-5 would require the organization to contact Adobe Systems Incorporated, and urge it to make the accessible document setting the default rather than the option. It would also require a copy of this resolution be sent to the American Council of the Blind for consideration at its 2013 Conference and

and Convention.

Resolution 2013A-6 requires this organization to inform the Judicial Council of the failure of some jurisdictions to comply with requirements contained in law and a rule of court adopted by the California Supreme Court for providing accommodations for blind people who are called to serve on juries, and provides that the organization shall assist its members who have been denied the accommodations discussed in this resolution to contact the Judicial Council.

Resolution 2013A-7 expresses our profound appreciation for the outstanding work of the volunteers at the Spring 2013 Conference and Convention of the

California Council of the Blind.

Resolution 2013A-8 expresses our appreciation for the outstanding services provided prior to, and

during, the Spring 2013 Conference and Convention of the California Council of the Blind by the staff of the Arden West Hilton Hotel.

Gil Johnson Honored by California Department of Rehabilitation

Gil Johnson And Stuart Wittenstein

[Editor's Note: A number of you have let me know how much you enjoyed the Spring BC interview with Gil Johnson, counselor and supervisor for many years with the California Department of Rehabilitation. Literally hours after the BC went off to its various formatters, I received the good news you'll find below. Congratulations Gil: well deserved!]

I am pleased to let friends and colleagues know that I have been chosen as one of the Department of Rehabilitation's 50 notable people in celebration of their 50th anniversary.

From the Department's website:

"50 NOTABLE PEOPLE

In celebration of the Department of

Rehabilitation's 50th Anniversary, the DOR solicited nominations for individuals who inspire others by their advocacy, leadership, accomplishments, achievements, and/or dedication to the disability movement and to employment, independence, and equality of Californians with disabilities.

Fifty individuals will be highlighted as a part of the "50 Notable People in the Disability Community."

I was honored to have been nominated by Stuart Wittenstein, Superintendent of the California School for the Blind. I have attached his thoughtful nomination letter. I don't know exactly when my bio and links to other information

about me will be posted, but if anyone wants to check, the link is:

www.dor.ca.gov/DOR-50-Years/50-Notable-People.html

[And here is Stuart's letter of nomination.]

Nomination of Gil Johnson as one of the 50 Most Notable People in the Disability Community

Nominated by Stuart Wittenstein, Ed.D., Superintendent, California School for the Blind

I personally want to nominate Gil Johnson because in addition to the professional achievements and activities described below (and limited space prevents me from

listing even more of Gil's exemplary accomplishments), Gil provides an excellent role model to blind students such as the ones at my school, the California School for the Blind. Gil is a husband, parent, grandparent, homeowner, taxpayer, and citizen in addition to his professional achievements, and as such demonstrates to our students that their disabilities need not keep them from achieving their own American Dream. Gil was born in rural Colorado with congenital glaucoma. His 8th grade educated parents moved to Minnesota during WWII enabling Gil to attend the Minnesota School for the Blind. At age 14 he lost his remaining vision and quickly learned the adaptive

skills

necessary to live a full personal [and] professional life.

Gil Johnson has been an innovator and leader in employment and rehabilitation of blind persons for 44 years. He has worked as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Supervisor, Director of Programs for The LightHouse for the Blind, Director of a State Rehabilitation agency, Director of the National Employment Center of the American Foundation for the Blind, and Senior Advisor on Critical Issues. He has received several awards and certificates of appreciation during his career including the John H. McAulay award from the Association of

Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired and an award from the California Council of the Blind for articles published in the Blind Californian.

Although he has been retired for more than 4 years, he is still recognized by many for his knowledge and expertise on employment issues. He has always believed that rehabilitation professionals who honor and respect the interests and strengths of blind job seekers, respecting employers as equal partners in the rehabilitation process, and with appropriate training, is what is needed to facilitate successful competitive employment outcomes.

Among Gil's outstanding accomplishments are: developed transition program for students nearing completion of their education (Gil was DOR liaison to the California School for the Blind); served on DOR's Blind Advisory Committee, the State Rehabilitation Council, and the Institute on Rehabilitation Issues seeking ways for local and national business partnerships to improve the competitive employment outcomes for clients of state rehabilitation agencies, developed state-wide recruitment program in collaboration with the Social Security Administration in California to train and employ visually impaired persons as service representatives and claims

representatives (program served as model for the program that Lions World Services in Little Rock); placed approximately 20 blind and visually impaired persons in employment each year during the 7 years he worked as a rehabilitation counselor; was one of the first blind persons appointed as a supervisor by CA DOR; developed and managed "National Employment Summit" with 25 participants from the private sector, education, rehabilitation, federal government, and consumers; assisted in guiding the consumer organizations and

representatives of private rehabilitation agencies serving blind persons in California to develop and pass legislation (SB105) which established a Division within the CA DOR to administer rehabilitation programs for blind and visually impaired persons (resulting in some improvement in the number of persons competitively employed and with consumers having much more influence over policies of the Division).

Thanks for the opportunity to describe this great Californian whom I believe to be worthy of recognition.

Candle in The Window 2013

Donna Pomerantz

**Where: Wooded Glen,
Henryville, IN**

**When: August 7-11,
2013**

Topic: "Self Advocacy"

**Presentations will
include:**

**Being your own best
advocate**

**Getting what you need
in family relationships**

**Getting what you need
from "the system"
(rehab, government)**

**Getting what you need
in the social scene**

**In addition to the
conference sessions
there will be plenty of
time to reflect, get to
know other conference
participants, relax and
enjoy the outdoors and
more!**

**The cost of the
conference, per person
is \$500 double
occupancy, \$480 triple
occupancy, and \$430
quad occupancy. The
cost includes room, all
meals and ground
transportation between
Louisville and Wooded
Glen.**

**When making
transportation
arrangements, arrange
to arrive in Louisville,
Kentucky, where
transportation will be
provided to the
conference center.**

**We limit attendance to
20 participants, so it
would be advisable to
make your reservations
early. A \$40 deposit
(non refundable) will
reserve your spot. If
payment is received**

before July 1, a \$15 discount is offered.

Registration closes August 1, 2013.

Payment by check may be sent to: Carlos Taylor: 925 S Luick Ave. Muncie, IN 47302; email: cetaylor1@gmail.com.

Make checks payable to Candle In the Window. Email acandleinthewindow1

@gmail.com for PayPal information.

Any questions may be directed to Deb Lewis debbiel09@insightbb.com; (502) 721-9129 or Becky Barnes, beckyjim@optonline.net or (914) 393-6613.

We hope to see you at this year's Candle in the Window!

The Candle Board

Governmental Affairs Report

Jeff Thom

It is often said that, when listening or reading, we retain little more than the very beginning and the very end. I've made the following point at the end of many of my messages, both in this position and when I was president, and it

hasn't resulted in much feedback. So, I have decided to make it at the beginning and see what happens.

You, the members, are the driving force behind what issues we choose to take on in Sacramento and even in

our nation's capitol. Thus, I want to hear from you on what issues are most important to you, what you think we need to do about them, and whether you intend to put in some elbow grease toward accomplishing what you'd like to see happen. You can call me at 916-995-3967 or email me at jeff.thom@ccbnet.org. And what might your responses generate? Well, anything from a possible column in this magazine, to action at our state convention, and perhaps even a bill in Sacramento. The only thing I can say with certainty is that if you don't speak up you won't be heard.

So what's new in Sacramento? With the Democrats holding supermajorities in both

Houses of the Legislature and the better-than-expected tax revenue projections, the political climate is much calmer than it has been in recent years. The Governor, however, has vowed to be very conservative when it comes to new spending, so you can expect potential vetoes in the upcoming budget and on bills that he deems are out of line with his promise to hold the line on fiscal matters. An interesting example that should tell us a great deal about the landscape involves a 10% Medi-Cal provider cut which the courts have upheld on top of other cuts that are being made to provider rates. Interestingly enough, California has one of the lowest Medicaid program provider rates in the

nation, a fact that causes providers to leave the Medi-Cal program or to raise private rates to make up for their losses under Medi-Cal. In that context, AB900, a bill which has strong support by Medi-Cal providers, local governments, and advocacy groups, as well as wide support among both Republicans and Democrats, would overturn this 10% cut. It remains to be seen what will happen as the budget process goes forward. Interestingly enough, even Democrats appear to want to create a fairly strong reserve out of some one-time tax revenues that came in this year.

There also appears to be broad, bipartisan

support on another budget issue, which was one of our Capitol Day legislative imperatives: namely that of specifically allocating some of the funding that will go to community colleges to restore part of the 40% cut in disabled students programs and services funding. The Capitol Day participants and others who testified at budget hearings did a fine job representing CCB on this issue. Only time will tell whether the Governor gets on board with the Legislature on this issue.

Another of our Capitol Day imperatives was opposition of AB459, a bill that would gradually raise from 35% to 100% the amount of healthy foods and beverages that blind

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vendors would be required to have in vending machines on state property. Since many vendors do not have even close to a median-level of income, even a small drop in their vending facility revenue has a serious impact on their ability to stay in business. On the other hand, healthy food advocates are equally passionate and feel they need to do whatever it takes to create a healthier society. So often, California is on the cutting edge of controversial issues; I have little doubt that this is just one more example. Our vendors support the provision of healthy food choices, but not when it places them at a severe competitive disadvantage to others in the marketplace who

are not required to comply with similar requirements.

Lastly, I want to mention something that I would characterize as a very happy coincidence. A couple of years ago, at the urging of Governmental Affairs Committee member Steve Mendelsohn, we adopted a resolution calling for more persons with disabilities to be appointed as part of the judiciary. Although our resolution never even raised an eyebrow with the Governor's office, a bill is moving swiftly through the Legislature, AB1005 by Assemblymember Alejo, that would require data to be collected on members and prospective appointees to the judiciary based on disability, in a manner similar to that

which is required under current law for other minority segments of our population. This bill is not the complete answer to our concerns, but it is a major step forward in shedding light on the problem. We weren't responsible for the bill, but we certainly are supporting

it.

Well, that just about wraps it up for this column. However, there's one thing you can be sure of, there will always be plenty of items that can be included in this report, so stay tuned and keep up the good work.

Set Sail for Hawaii

Dave Kronk

[Editor's Note: The ACB works with Dave on setting up cruises for visually-impaired folks and their families and friends. My husband Steve and I took this same cruise just this past New Year's from Los Angeles (14 days instead of 15). I'm lobbying to go again with all our ACB/CCB friends next year.

Aloha!]

Hi Everyone,

Listed below is the information on the cruise.

15 Day cruise round trip from San Francisco with Princess Cruise Lines.

We will board the Grand Princess on April 28,

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2014 and travel to Hilo Hawaii, Honolulu Hawaii, Kauai Hawaii, Maui Hawaii and Ensenada Mexico before returning to San Francisco. Rates are as follows: Inside cabin \$2,339.50, Ocean view cabin \$3,039.50, and for a private Balcony cabin \$3,389.50. Rates include cruise, port charges, taxes, and gratuities. What is not included is your airfare,

transfers, and insurance.

Also, I am planning for those who would like to fly in on Saturday, April 26th to do a tour of Alcatraz on Sunday.

To book your fabulous cruise to Hawaii call me at 618-409-0143.

See you on the cruise.

Proposed Constitutional Amendments

Gabe Griffith, CCB Constitution And Bylaws Committee Chair

The following are three proposed amendments to the CCB Constitution. They had their first reading at our spring 2013 convention in Sacramento and will have their second reading with voting at

the fall convention in San Diego.

**Article 17.
Constitutional
Amendments.**

**Current:
Section 17.1 This**

Constitution may be amended at any regular Convention of the Council by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members who are present and voting. The proposed amendment shall have been introduced at the previous regular Convention of the Council and it shall have been presented in writing to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

Section 17.2 This Constitution may also be amended at any regular Convention of the Council by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members who are present and voting provided that the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing to the Constitution and

Bylaws Committee and that it shall have been presented to the Council Convention at least one day prior to the day on which the final action is taken.

Action(s): Delete both Section 17.1 and Section 17.2 and replace them with a rewritten Article 17.

Proposed:

**Article 17.
Constitutional
Amendments.**

This Constitution may be amended at any regular conference and convention provided such proposed amendment has been presented in writing to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee at least two days prior to the day on which the final action is taken.

Any proposed amendment shall have a first reading to the convention without discussion and a final reading with discussion (if necessary) at the time the vote is taken. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting is required to adopt a constitutional amendment according to voting procedures contained herein. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws shall take effect on the July 1st immediately following the relevant vote.

Article 4. Newel Perry Endowment Trust.

Current:

Section 4.3 The trustees shall serve without compensation. Their duties shall be to accept, receive and

hold, invest and reinvest contributions to the Newel Perry Endowment Trust, with interest thereon and additions and accretions thereto, and such other income that might accrue, upon the order of the Board of Directors of the California Council of the Blind, shall pay out and distribute the earned income for the purposes set forth in this Article. The Board of Directors shall not order the expenditure of the corpus unless a Constitutional amendment is adopted for that purpose which must be proposed at the regular constituted Convention prior to the regular constituted Convention at which such amendment is adopted, as provided in Article XVII, Section 17.1 of this

Constitution.

Action(s): Replace the comma after the word accrue with a period and delete the remainder of the Section, that is, 'upon the order of the Board of Directors of the California Council of the Blind, shall pay out and distribute the earned income for the purposes set forth in this Article. The Board of Directors shall not order the expenditure of the corpus unless a Constitutional amendment is adopted for that purpose which must be proposed at the regular constituted Convention prior to the regular constituted Convention at which such amendment is adopted, as provided in Article XVII, Section 17.1 of this Constitution' and

replace it with 'Upon the order of the Board of Directors of the California Council of the Blind, the trustees shall pay out and distribute the earned income for the purposes set forth in this Article. The Board of Directors shall not order the expenditure of the corpus unless a Constitutional amendment is adopted for that purpose as provided in Article 17 of this Constitution'.

Proposed:

Section 4.3 The trustees shall serve without compensation. Their duties shall be to accept, receive and hold, invest and reinvest contributions to the Newel Perry Endowment Trust, with interest thereon and additions and accretions

thereto, and such other income that might accrue. Upon the order of the Board of Directors of the California Council of the Blind, the trustees shall pay out and distribute the earned income for the purposes set forth in this Article. The Board of Directors shall not order the expenditure of the corpus unless a Constitutional amendment is adopted for that purpose as provided in Article 17 of this Constitution.

Article 10. Board of Directors Composition.

Current:

Section 10.4 All officers and directors shall be elected for two-year terms, subject, however, to the provisions set forth in

this Article. The President, First Vice President, Treasurer and four directors shall be elected at the Convention in each even numbered year. The Second Vice President, the Secretary and 5 directors shall be elected at the Convention in each odd numbered year. The terms of officers and directors shall commence January 1 of the year following the adjournment of the Convention at which their election occurs.

Action(s): Beginning with the word 'fall', delete it and the remainder of the Section, that is, 'Fall Convention of each even numbered year. The Second Vice President, the Secretary and 5 directors shall be elected at the Fall

Convention of each odd numbered year. The terms of officers and directors shall commence January 1 of the year following the adjournment of the Convention at which their election occurs' and replace it with 'annual Convention of each even numbered year. The Second Vice President, the Secretary and 5 directors shall be elected at the annual Convention of each odd numbered year. The terms of officers and directors shall commence on July 1 immediately following the adjournment of the Convention at which their election occurs.

Add the following explanatory paragraph regarding the change to one Conference per year and the need to adjust terms of office:

"Inasmuch as the Council has acted to hold its Conference and Convention on an annual basis instead of the current semiannual basis, the service length of those elected in the penultimate and ultimate Conventions at which elections were, or will be, held under the current provisions shall have their terms adjusted accordingly. Those elected fall, 2012 shall serve from January 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014; those to be elected Fall, 2013 shall serve from January 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015."

Proposed:

Section 10.4 All officers and directors shall be elected for two-year terms, subject, however, to the provisions set forth

in this Article. The President, First Vice President, Treasurer and four directors shall be elected at the annual Convention of each even numbered year. The Second Vice President, the Secretary and 5 directors shall be elected at the annual Convention of each odd numbered year. The terms of officers and directors shall commence on July 1 immediately following the adjournment of the Convention at which their election occurs.

Inasmuch as the Council has acted to hold its Conference and Convention on an annual basis instead of the current semiannual basis, the service length of those elected in the penultimate and ultimate Conventions at which elections were, or

will be, held under the current provisions shall have their terms adjusted accordingly. Those elected fall, 2012 shall serve from January 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014; those to be elected Fall, 2013 shall serve from January 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

There were also several amendments that were passed at the spring convention. These included topics such as Newel Perry endowment, conference and convention time and site selection, board of directors duties. Bylaw amendments that were adopted dealt with cleaning up references to the spring convention and making the references to annual convention.

Full texts of these adopted amendments can be obtained in your

preferred format by contacting the CCB office at 800-221-6359.

Woof Woof! It's Mutt Strut Time Again

Lynn Coats and Kendall

[Editor's Note: Well it's that time of year again when this magazine goes to the dogs. This year to introduce our third annual Mutt Strut, we bring you Kendall and his Mom Lynn. Lynn is a relative newcomer to the CCB, but boy has she jumped in with both feet. Here is how she introduced herself recently on one of the CCB lists.

"I've been in CCB for about five years. Currently I am the first vice president of the greater Los Angeles chapter and the vice-chair of the Los Angeles

region Mutt Strut Committee. I live in Northridge and have a black Labrador guide dog Kendall."] Woof woof,

This is Kendall. My mom is Lynn. Well, she's not my original mom, but she is my mom right now. Listen, I have been lying around trying to figure out what this mutt strut is. So with the help of the cat, (and please don't tell any other dogs that), I downloaded a doggy translation app from the app store on to my mom's phone. How else do you think I'm

writing this? Anyway, I figured out that the California Council of the blind, which is that organization my mom belongs to, is holding a fundraiser called the Mutt strut. It's a walk or run. That is either 2K or 5K whatever that means. I don't suppose it means run to you and get five kibble does it? I'm all for that.

It's on September 7. I figured out that it will be held in three different regions. (Hold on a minute, I have an itch: Scratch scratch scratch scratch scratch! That's better.) It's going to be held where I live which is in Los Angeles, and it will be held where my friend lives which is in Sacramento and it will be held where this other dog named Avalon lives which is in San

Francisco. I have met her. She's cool. Now, all you humans need to do is participate however you can. One way is to go to www.ccbnet.org/muttstrut and register. (Wait a minute, the ducks just landed in the pool!) Okay, I'm back. Now, if you can complete the entire process yourself, that's great. However, if you need help (and my mom says most folks have needed help this year) please call the office and Ed can help you. Whoever that is. I've never gotten petted by him before. And if I haven't been petted by someone I don't know them. Oh yeah what was I talking about? Oh yes. The Mutt strut.

After you have registered, then you start getting people to donate or sponsor you.

And then you show up with or without your dog and you walk or run. You can only do one region though. Because they all start at the same time. Registration is at 8:00 AM on September 7 and the race is at 9 AM. And, I hear that Sacramento is putting on a pancake breakfast. How I would love to be there for that. I will be more than willing to clean up: (that is whatever is dropped on the floor). I don't take food off of people's plates. I'm a good boy. Another way to participate is to pass out flyers, brochures and envelopes. My mom won't let me do this. She says I'll shred up the flyers. I'm a lab. Isn't that what you do with pieces of paper? You get them from your local chapter or one of the three regional

chairs or from that Ed person I mentioned before.

Just contact one of the three people in charge of each region. In Los Angeles it's my buddy Ken Metz. He has a hot looking black lab named Cari. (Sorry! My personal thoughts got in the way.) Then there is Jeff Thom in Sacramento. My friend a yellow lab lives in his house. (Sorry about that again; I'm a dog. I can't help but socialize.) And then there is Frank Welte in San Francisco. His guide dog Jeep wrote this article last year.

I need all of you to get out there and work work work! My mom said that CCB has done a lot on behalf of us dogs. Dog guides that is. And they have done a

lot for blind people too. My mom likes being in CCB. And she is working hard because she enjoys the benefits that this organization has helped to provide. I do too. We can go into public places because of the work organizations like the CCB have done. I love going into restaurants. I love going to Trader Joe's. (And it's not because of the treat I get when my mom is done shopping. Okay, yes it is.) I love going to Dodger games. Especially when the game is over: especially when I can stick my head in a bucket of popcorn. (Yes, I really did that!) So if you don't do your part, how can this organization continue to press forward? My mom says that without the money, we wouldn't have these programs. Like in

emergency fund for women. Or scholarships. Things like that a lot of which are mentioned in those pieces of paper. So get out there and make this the best fundraiser that we can make it.

Now can someone tell me how to get all of this doggy drool off of my mom's phone before she finds out? Thanks.

[Editor's Note: So Lynn won't find out about Kendall using her phone, I'll provide the information for contacting the regional chairs.

**Sacramento Event
Chair: Jeff Thom, 916-995-3967
jeff.thom@ccbnet.org.**

**Los Angeles Event C
Chair: Ken Metz 323-793-1805**

kenmetz1946@gmail.com.

**San Francisco Event
Chair: Frank Welt_e**

**510-541-1442 frank-
welte@sbcglobal.net**

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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