

THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN

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CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

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Jeff Thom, President

7414 Mooncrest Way, Sacramento, CA 95831

916-429-8201

jeff.thom@ccbnet.org

Executive Office:

California Council of the Blind

1303 J Street Suite 400, Sacramento, CA 95814-2900

800-221-6359 toll free

916-441-2100 voice

916-441-2188 fax

Email: ccotb@ccbnet.org

Website: www.ccbnet.org

San Francisco Bay Area Office:

Catherine Skivers

836 Resota Street, Hayward, CA 94545-2120

510-357-1986

cathie.skivers@ccbnet.org

Los Angeles Area Office:

Donna Pomerantz

1115 Cordova Street #402, Pasadena, CA 91106-3036

626-844-4388

donna.pomerantz@ccbnet.org

Mitch Pomerantz, Director

Advocacy and Governmental Affairs

800-221-6359 toll free

626-672-5150 cell

governmentalaffairs@ccbnet.org

Webmaster:

webmaster@ccbnet.org

Judy Wilkinson, Editor

1550 Bancroft Avenue #113, San Leandro, CA 94577-5264

510-357-1844

editor@ccbnet.org

Susan Glass, Associate Editor

408-257-1034

editor@ccbnet.org

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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 2015 issue of THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN is noon on Friday November 21, 2014.

Please send all address changes to Executive Office.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

From The Editors’ Desk by Judy Wilkinson 5

President’s Message: Something for Everyone by Jeff Thom..... 8

Spring Conference/Convention: California Council of the Blind by Patricia Nash 11

Sierra Regional Ski For Light Schedule by Betsy Rowell . 20

Business Minutes: Fall 2013 CCB Convention at The Del Mar Marriott Hotel by Gabe Griffith, CCB Secretary (through 2013)..... 22

CCB Governmental Affairs by Mitch Pomerantz..... 26

Dr. Newel Perry Remembered: Excerpt from The 50th Anniversary of CCB by Catherine Skivers..... 30

California Council of the Blind (CCB) Strategic Plan 2013 - 2016 by Board of Directors 50

California Council of the Blind 2014 Officers and Board... 56

From The Editors’ Desk

by Judy Wilkinson

All year we’ve been trumpeting the fact that the Council is 80 this year. Actually, the CCB is 80 on October 6, 2014. See Catherine Skivers’ article “Founding Of The California Council of the Blind” in the BC Winter, 2014 issue for a transcript of the minutes which founded the organization.

Almost a third of this issue presents an address by Dr. Jacobus tenBroek in honor of Dr. Newel Perry. We

couldn’t think of a more fitting way to celebrate CCB’s birthday. Read the address and you’ll know why we exist.

Hard on the heels of his hard work chairing the Sacramento region’s successfully-completed fourth annual Mutt Strut, President Jeff Thom further reminds us of why we have been here 80 years and what we might consider doing in the future.

What more fitting way to celebrate our birthday than to present CCB's Strategic Plan (for at least the next five years)? We will include the goals of the plan over the next two issues. As you read it, think of where your skills and interests could benefit the organization and let Jeff know.

And now a surprise announcement: those who perused the masthead or grammarians in the crowd who carefully read the title of this column may have gotten a clue.

"My name is Susan Glass, and I am both delighted and honored to join Judy Wilkinson as the Blind Californian's Associate Editor. I want to thank my colleagues on the CCB

Publications Committee for entrusting me with this responsibility, and I hope that my service on the BC will confirm that your trust is well placed.

"A bit about me: I'm recently retired from my full-time position as an English and Women's Studies professor at West Valley Community College. I live with my husband John Glass and my guide dog Zeus in Saratoga California. Both John and I are active members of the Silicon Valley Council of the Blind. John is currently vice president of our chapter, and I am Program Chair and editor of our newsletter In Touch. I like singing, writing, playing the harp, hiking, and birding by ear. I also like dark chocolate.

“Recently, Linda Porelle, Judy Wilkinson and I met by phone to brainstorm what we thought would be the best roles and responsibilities for an associate editor. One strategic goal of the BC is to promote CCB membership and chapter growth. To that end, we'd like to feature the activities of an individual chapter in each issue of the BC. As associate Editor, I will be reaching out to chapter presidents to learn about your chapter's projects and goals. Over a three-year cycle of BC publishing, we hope to feature every chapter and every affiliate. In other words, we'd like to create a Chapter Spotlight column. So, if your chapter has done, or is doing something about which

you're enthused, please contact me by email at susancglass@att.net or by phone at 408-429-9567.

“We also want to feature individuals who are doing inspiring work in the blind community. I will be interviewing people for these articles as well. By the way, did you know that the CCB website features a Hall of Fame honoring blind individuals who have provided outstanding leadership and service in CCB, ACB, and the blindness community in general? Its roster is impressive and features folks from all walks of life. Take a look.

“Essentially, I will be the BC's roving editor: interviewing, researching, brainstorming, and

gathering ideas for interesting features. Judy and I will also collaborate on planning and assembling each issue, and I will support her in whatever ways I can be most helpful.”

To think that Susan and I who shared the exact same career (professors of English at community colleges) should now join

forces. You will have a better Blind Californian as a result! Though Susan gave her personal email: you can always reach both your editors at editor@ccbnet.org. I am incredibly pleased as we begin volume 59, #1, with the winter issue to be joined by such a skilled associate editor. Welcome aboard Susan! -----

President’s Message: Something for Everyone

by Jeff Thom

How many times have you heard CCB members say that a chapter should be primarily concerned with advocacy and related work in the community? On the other hand, how many times have you heard the view that social functions are every bit as (and

maybe more important)? Perhaps even more to the point, there are members who feel that even though advocacy is a good thing, it just isn’t for me for one reason or another, so let the other folks do it. Moreover, there are those who insist that if members

want social functions, that's fine, but just leave me out of it.

The theme of this article is a simple one. Those who limit themselves to either the advocacy side of things or the social side are both doing CCB a disservice, even though they likely do not realize it.

For 80 years our mission has been and is to improve the lives of persons who are blind or who have low vision. At the core of this mission has always been advocating on behalf of persons with visual impairments. Whether this means going before Congress, the state legislature, or the city council or county board of supervisors, advocating before federal, state, or

local administrative agencies, going to court, or working in many other ways to assist the members of our community, CCB has always been at the forefront. Some people have a real love for engaging in such work, while others either don't care about it or are not convinced they can really do the job when it comes to advocacy.

At the other end of the spectrum, many people love getting together with other persons who are blind or who have low vision just to have fun. Pizza parties, bingo games, Tupperware or Pampered Chef parties, movie nights, picnics, jaunts to a casino or a baseball game, the list is endless. They just enjoy

the comradeship of others that have visual impairments. And yet some of those who work tirelessly to help those with vision loss just don't want to get involved in this type of activity with other CCB members.

So what's wrong with this picture? What's the problem with a "different strokes for different folks" attitude? In theory, nothing, but practically speaking I would argue that each group sends a harmful message to the other.

Those who enjoy the social functions but avoid advocacy at all cost make those advocates feel like the entire burden of the chapter's work is upon them. "Why should we

work so hard when those folks don't do any work?" One argument made by those who don't want to work on any type of advocacy is that I am just no good at it. Well, you don't need to have a silver tongue or be able to write a novel. If you go to your transit district meeting when bus service is being reduced and just sit with your colleagues who are talking or maybe just say a few words about how losing that bus line is going to hurt you, that's all you need to do. It isn't that hard, and it makes a real difference. Moreover it really makes the hardcore advocates feel that you are in the boat with them.

On the other side of the fence, those who never attend social functions

make others begin to wonder whether somehow those who stay away consider themselves better than the rest of the members. People have busy lives and many competing priorities, but it is important to show how much you value your colleagues by participating in at least some of the social events.

Advocacy and social

functions are both perceived as important goals, a stronger sense of unity can develop among all chapter members. And isn't this what all of us really want? So if you have a comfort zone as either an advocate or a participant in social functions, jump outside that comfort zone and you'll be doing everyone (and even yourself) a big favor. -----

Spring Conference/Convention: California

Council of the Blind

by Patricia Nash

[Editor's Note: However much you might have enjoyed reading Ken Metz's article "Out Of The Doghouse" in the spring issue of the BC, and however delighted you

may have been that Guide Dog Users of California has once again become a vital, active affiliate, you probably didn't want to read it twice! Especially under Patty Nash's

promised article on the spring conference/convention! Once the horrible truth was brought to my attention, Annette Carter who has been doing our layout beginning with the spring issue, and I tried to sleuth out how/why this could have happened. As is sometimes necessary, because of space restrictions, we slot articles in and out at the last minute! Well what can I say! Those computer gremlins sneaked in and did a bait-and-switch! No excuses! we “—ed” up!

I've known Patty's writing since she served as Bay View Chapter's Secretary for several years. As soon as she was elected as our delegate, I tapped her to write this convention

article. So often I must wheedle or twist arms, but Patty enthusiastically agreed to the assignment. She gave a fine report at our chapter meeting the Saturday following convention, and here then, (albeit belatedly) is her thoughtful report.]

The annual conference and convention of the California Council of the Blind was held from Thursday, April 10, to Sunday, April 13, 2014, at the Arden West Hilton Hotel in Sacramento. The theme of the conference was "Celebrating 80 Years of Achievement, Advocacy Accessibility", and was suggested by Vita Zavoli, TOG Chair and board member. It was hosted by the Capitol Chapter, and was different from other

years being the first "annual" conference/convention for CCB.

The Board of Directors Meeting was held on Thursday, noon, and it lasted a grueling four hours, but much was accomplished. The meeting was presided over by President Donna Pomerantz, and many committee reports were given. First the agenda for the meeting was read by Secretary Judy Wilkinson and approved. Then there were reports on the Mutt Strut, Ellen Murphy Fund, Newel Perry, Budget And Finance, the TOG committee which is responsible for the maintenance of the entire CCB website, Facebook and Twitter, and California Connection. Most board

members have responsibilities for specific committees, and the tasks they perform are daunting including ensuring we have affordable, comfortable and accessible accommodations for our future conferences. In the Publications Committee Report we learned that the cost for printing The Blind Californian is \$12,000 per year, and though a survey was taken of the membership to determine which formats we could receive it in if braille or cassette copies were discontinued, we were assured that at this time neither format will be discontinued. Maintenance costs are rising as our economy tries to recoup from the recession of 2008.

Jeff Thom thanked Donna for a good job conducting the board meeting; she said that help from each and every member of our organization is needed to carry out our goals and to make our ideas a reality and our organization what we want it to be. So we should stay informed and keep working. She also thanked everyone for their hard work. Frank Welte suggested that in odd-numbered years the convention should be held up north, so that the new legislative session could work on bills, and they would gain momentum.

I was inspired to hear that Al Gil has been a member of CCB for 63 years, and he donated money to continue our work and his wife Connie made a \$500

donation to the Blind Californian.

In the first general session on Friday afternoon, we first heard from Mark Lees of the California Department of business Oversight, who talked about protecting yourself from financial fraud.

Personal information can be collected bit by bit over time to steal one's identity. Some safeguards we can take are burning or shredding mail, (even just with your name and address on it), picking up mail on time, and being careful what you share on the internet. There is a toll-free call center 866-275-2677, or go to www.dbo.ca.gov.

We next heard from Albert Rizzi from My Blind Spot,

who told about his work partnering with Adaptive Technology Services to make Quick Books accessible to accountants, and the goal would be to tailor the products to our needs first without having to make them accessible later. A demonstration of writing a check was given. Information can be obtained from www.myblindspot.org.

We heard from a representative from Covered California, and she was informed that all materials provided by a state-run health organization should be in an accessible format.

Friday evening I attended the Presidents' Dinner which was a candidates' forum. Though it was

enjoyable and informative and necessary, I missed hearing what the chapters were doing for special projects; they are always a source of inspiration.

Friday evening's session began with a moment of silence for those members who had passed on during the past year. At this time Donna Pomerantz recognized the 3 silver sponsors of the conference/Convention: Vanda Pharmaceuticals, Lainey Feingold, and Linda Dardarian. Donna stated that our history has been marvelous, and who knows where we'll be in the next 80 years!

Pam Polagi announced the slate of officers to be voted on and they were President Jeff Thom; First Vice

President Eugene Lozano Jr.; Treasurer Peter Pardini; the directors were Vincent Calderon, Leena Dawes, Frank Welte and Paul Patche Jr. She then gave the Credentials Report, and 14 chapters were not seated at this convention.

Gene Lozano next introduced Dr. Melissa Olivadoti, who gave us an update on Non-24-Hour Sleep Disorder, and its treatment in people with no light perception. She works with Vanda Pharmaceuticals as their Medical Science Liaison in Washington DC. She announced that the new treatment of this disorder was approved this day, April 12, 2014. Circadian rhythms are built into our bodies by certain

environmental factors of the primary one being daylight. Our body wants to be on a 25-hour day. To make adjustments our body shifts the time from 10 minutes to up to an hour. The eyes send messages to the brain on light and darkness, to reset our body clock each day. Each cell has a time clock, and they are all on the same timing. Light and darkness signal the hormones for sleep. So it's like the atomic clock. Our clock is advancing, so our body will fight us if we try to go by the clock. This can result in naps during the day and wakefulness at night. Retraining your body is not enough to counteract the impact of no light stimulus to the brain center. The company is working with insurance

companies to put the treatment on their formularies. Vanda is committed to get help to those patients who need the treatment even if they can't afford the cost. The name of the drug is Hetlioz.

Many of us are diagnosed with insomnia, because doctors are not aware of this disorder, and much publicity is going out to remedy this, and there is a website to which doctors can go for information.

Jeff Thom gave a very thorough legislative report. [See his report elsewhere in this issue.] He also updated us on structured negotiations: including accessible credit reports: get yours at creditreport.com); more accessible banking

including statements and accessible ATMS, great accessibility of Weightwatchers, and cvs.com has mail-order prescriptions; you can also obtain Scriptalx from Envision America.

Ron Brooks, member of the ACB Board of Publications was the ACB representative. A former member of CCB, now from Arizona, he gave the national ACB report. He spoke about legislation in education which would ensure children have accessible materials in elementary school. He said braille is much more accessible in other countries; braille labels are on groceries and food, even wine bottles.

Donna gave her moving,

final President's Report. She spoke about recent CCB activities and thanked everyone for their support. She expressed her sorrow at having to leave office sooner than she had wanted to.

We next had the election of officers and directors. All candidates were voted in by acclamation.

This year on Saturday, there was no afternoon session, but instead two simultaneous tracks: one on employment. I attended the leadership training track which was really informative and fun. If you do get a chance to attend the convention you should go. Leena Dawes, Jeff Thom, Mitch Pomerantz, and Frank Welte provided an excellent forum for

learning. There was much information to bring back to the chapter, with wise advice and an opportunity for participation. We were advised that keeping our eye on the prize and being a fine example by working hard were essential to leadership. A good leader is determined by the results he gets. We were given tips on conducting meetings, familiarizing ourselves with Robert's Rules of Order. We learned that each person has a niche, and there are jobs for all types of people. We are working for advocacy and do not need to get into personalities. Leena facilitated the next part and we broke into groups. She asked if we were formal, or informal, domineering or easygoing, and then we had to answer questions

and learned a whole lot about personality types. This was my favorite activity of the convention, and I learned the most from it to use in interacting with personalities in my workplace and my local chapter.

Saturday night is banquet time. I was honored to sit with Leslie and Jeff Thom. Ron Brooks was an excellent master of ceremonies and introduced the presenters and speakers. The banquet was uplifting, enjoyable and touching. He first introduced all of the life members, and when Donna was going to pay her \$100 donation to add her name to this list, Ardis Bazyn presented her with a life membership to which many contributed.

Next Ardis wore her hat as Chair of the Membership Committee. She presented chapter growth awards: to CLUA for the most new members and to GDUC for the greatest percentage increase. Humboldt Chapter received the Chapter of the Year award for their getting audio-described movies in their local theaters. Margie Donovan received a Humanitarian Award for getting audio-described musical productions into the theater, including a special time which people could see the costumes and props. Richard Louis also received an award for making these productions accessible. Linda Porelle gave Publication Committee awards to Vita Zavoli for her issue-

oriented article on employment and to Alice McGrath for her lifestyle article on The Braille Challenge. Ed Branch read all of the plaques.

Mitch Pomerantz's name was added to the California Council's Hall of Fame, which is a plaque which hangs in the state office and contains the plaque with each name on them.

Ardis Bazyn also presented a charter to the Greater Lakewood Chapter and then Ron Brooks presented Albert Rizzi who

spoke about his struggles adjusting to blindness; thanks to his family, he always knew he was a leader and not a quitter. He is a promoter of accessibility.

Sunday morning was taken up with resolutions. [See Jeff's article summary elsewhere in this issue.] The treasurer's report was given, constitutional amendments were presented, and we are all very grateful to Donna Pomerantz for her dedication to CCB. -----

Sierra Regional Ski For Light Schedule

by Betsy Rowell

Sierra Regional Ski For Light (www.srsfl.org) is accepting applications for the 2015 ski season at

Tahoe Donner Cross Country in Truckee, CA. SRSFL offers guided cross country skiing and snow

shoeing for blind and visually impaired children and adults. Each skier and snowshoer is matched with a trained guide. SRSFL welcomes beginners to advanced skiers.

Scholarships are available. Fee includes transportation from Sacramento.

**2015 ski schedules:
Saturday Day Trips**

January 24, sign up
deadline January 17

February 7, sign up
deadline January 31

March 21, sign up deadline
March 14

FEES FOR DAY TRIPS

Adults 13-74: \$39 (\$19 if you have skis). Seniors 60-74: \$36 \$16 if you have

skis. Children 12 and under: \$12.

Super senior 75 and older: \$25, \$5 if you have skis.

Contact Betsy Rowell, SRSFL Skier Day Trip Coordinator, at 916-362-5557, email: betsy.rowell2@gmail.com

23rd annual three-day event (adults only)

**Saturday, February 28-
Monday, March 2, 2015.**

Lodging will be at the Hotel Truckee Tahoe, Truckee; CA. Skiing will be at Tahoe Donner Cross Country, Truckee, CA. Cost: \$275 (\$218 if you bring equipment). Fee includes 2 nights lodging (double occupancy), 2 breakfasts, 2 dinners, trail passes and transportation. Lodging at the Fairfield Inn & Suites in Rancho Cordova Friday night February 27: an

additional \$43 double, \$86 single.

Contact Cindy Quintana,
SRSFL Three-day Event

Coordinator, at
510-483-2948

email:

cindyq12345@sbcglobal.net

**Business Minutes: Fall 2013 CCB Convention
at The Del Mar Marriott Hotel by Gabe Griffith,
CCB Secretary (through 2013)**

[Editor's Note:

Unfortunately this article got bumped in the Summer BC, but as with all our minutes summaries, it is important historically, especially as the last of our semi-annual conventions.]

Friday

Credentials

Pam Polagi presented the credentials report. The chapters that were not seated were Antalope

Valley chapter, Golden Gate chapter, Greater Lakewood chapter, High Desert Chapter, Humbolt County chapter, Inland Empire chapter, and Solano County chapter.

Motion: It was moved and seconded to approve the credentials committee report. The motion passed unanimously.

Elections

The following officers and

directors were elected to the CCB board of directors. Roger Petersen 2nd Vice President, Judy Wilkinson Secretary, Ardis Bazyn director, John Ross director, Linda Porelle director, Robert Wendt director, and Vita Zavoli director.

Saturday

Constitution And Bylaws

Gabe Griffith gave the second reading of several amendments. All proposed amendments passed. The amended sections were: Article 17 constitutional amendments, Article 4 Newel Perry endowment trust, Article 10.4 board of directors composition.

Gabe then gave a first reading of several more

amendments to be voted on Sunday morning.

Sunday

Gabe read the business minutes from the Spring 2013 convention.

Motion: it was moved and seconded to approve the minutes. The motion passed.

Constitution and bylaws revisited

Gabe gave the second reading of several amendments. The amendments were all part of article 8. The amended sections of the constitution were 8.2, 8.6, 8.7, and 8.9. There was also the creation of a new bylaw number 4 specifying the membership and officer

sheet [officer and membership lists].

Motion: It was moved and seconded to adopt the constitution and bylaws committee report. The motion passed.

Resolutions

Jeff Thom read the resolutions. Following is a listing of the resolutions and the action taken.

- **2013 b1 state board of guide dogs for the blind - pass**
- **2013 b2 IHSS reader services - pass**
- **2013 b3 Department of rehabilitation purchasing - pass**
- **2013 b4 volunteers - pass**
- **2013 b5 BEP - pass**
- **2013 b6 Guide dog users of California - pass**

- **2013 b7 hotel appreciation - pass**

Motion: it was moved and seconded to accept the resolutions committee report. The motion passed.

Treasurer's report

Peter Pardini gave the treasurer's report. Total assets are \$1,057,243. The full report is available by contacting the CCB office.

Motion: it was moved and seconded to accept the treasurer's report. The motion passed.

Committee reports

Publications: Linda Porelle announced a survey that is in the BC regarding future formats.

Membership: Ardis Bazyn asked all chapters and affiliates to send her the email addresses for two members of their chapters for the membership email list.

Credentials: Pam Polagi thanked everyone for getting their information in on time and Ed for all his help.

TOG: Asked people to fill out the survey on web content and announced that the web site may be down while it is being migrated to another service.

New business

Marjie Donovan announced that she feels there should be a flag at the front of the

room during the pledge of allegiance. Mitch said there could be problems due to storage. Jeff suggested encouraging the convention planning committee to urge scout troops and other color guards in local areas to bring in a flag. Gene said the committee already does this.

Motion: Marjie moved that if there is not a flag in the front of the room that the pledge of allegiance be suspended. The motion was seconded. The motion failed.

Pam Metz thanked the GDUC board for all their work over the summer and the CCB board for their support.

Old business

There was no old business.

Public comments

Mike Keithley thanked the people responsible for keeping the ALD system going.

Cristy Crespin wanted to know what to do with name badges.

The next convention will be in Sacramento at the Arden West Hilton Hotel from April 10 through the 13th, 2014. -----

CCB Governmental Affairs

by Mitch Pomerantz

With Jeff Thom assuming the presidency of the California Council of the Blind, I was asked, and accepted appointment to chair the CCB Governmental Affairs Committee. As someone who has been an advocate on behalf of blind and visually impaired persons for over 40 years, as well as a longtime student of the US and California political scenes, I was

honored by President Thom's appointment and look forward to the challenge during the upcoming two years. And challenge it will be since I reside in Southern California rather than where the action is in Sacramento. Nonetheless, the President and I have worked out a plan which should accommodate CCB's advocacy activities satisfactorily.

We have done a bit of streamlining of the committee, reducing the number of voting members to 10. They are: Ardis Bazyn, Leena Dawes, Margie Donovan, Roy Harmon, Alice McGrath, Steven Mendelsohn, Charles Nabarrete, Teddie-Joy Remhild, Robert Wendt, and yours truly, Mitch Pomerantz. While the Committee is somewhat smaller in size, I want to strongly encourage each CCB chapter to appoint an advocacy representative who can participate on our email list, ccbqa-l@ccbnet.org and in teleconference meetings when those are scheduled. Whether you are a member of the Governmental Affairs Committee or not, you will play a key role in

promoting CCB's legislative agenda.

Now for an update relative to state and federal legislation of interest to the Council. Unfortunately there is nothing new to report on the two pieces of federal legislation being championed by the American Council of the Blind: H.R. 3749, which would establish demonstration projects under Medi-Care for the purchase of low vision aids and devices costing more than \$500, and H.R. 4040, which would institute a wide range of important reforms for the education of blind, low vision, deaf and hard of hearing children. Neither bill attracted sufficient co-sponsors during the current session of

Congress to move beyond the “bill introduction” stage of the legislative process so will be reintroduced in 2015 by ACB. It will be critical for our chapters to reach out to their members of Congress to educate them about the importance of both bills to constituents in their districts, both young and old.

An initiative which CCB has been supporting for several years: including reading and document completion as an IHSS (In-Home Support Services) benefit, was drafted as A.B. 1703. It ran into trouble in the Senate Appropriations Committee thanks to an unfavorable cost estimate by the Department of Finance. As a result, the bill was not removed from

the Suspense File and died in committee for this session.

Another bill which CCB supported, A.B. 1602, would have required Caltrans, rather than BEP (Business Enterprise Program) vendors operating roadside rest area facilities, to pay the utility costs associated with those facilities located on state property. Once again, the bill hit a roadblock in Senate Appropriations and is dead for this legislative session. CCB will work collaboratively with the Randolph Sheppard Vendors of California and others to get passage of this vital legislation during the upcoming legislative session.

And finally, A.B. 1193, which would allow local governments to develop and implement their own standards for the establishment and regulation of bicycle lanes (or cycle tracks), was initially opposed by CCB. The problem, as we saw it, was that there would be no uniformity from community to community. As an example, several municipalities are permitting cycle tracks between the sidewalk and where vehicles can park. CCB saw this as problematic from a pedestrian safety perspective. Ultimately, we took a neutral position when Caltrans agreed to involve its “existing advisory committee dedicated to improving

access for persons with disabilities.” That entity will develop guidelines which local jurisdictions will be encouraged to follow in establishing cycle tracks. Not surprisingly here in California, the bicycle lobby is very strong and A.B. 1193 has passed and was signed by Governor Brown.

It goes without saying that you, our members, need to pay close attention to what is happening in your local communities and be prepared to attend city council meetings where regulations for such bike lanes are being discussed. If you don’t speak out at such meetings, you may learn the hard way about cycle tracks and the hazards they present.

While it was a difficult legislative year for CCB, I assume my new position with considerable optimism. We are veterans of the advocacy movement and we know that getting what we need often takes

time and effort. Please join me and the Governmental Affairs Committee in putting forth the time and effort to make the lives of blind and visually impaired persons residing in California better. -----

**Dr. Newel Perry Remembered: Excerpt from
The 50th Anniversary of CCB
by Catherine Skivers**

[Editor's Note: In the Summer BC we presented the notice about Dr. Newel Perry's induction into the American Printinghouse's Hall Of Fame for leaders and legends of the blindness field. As a fitting tribute to Dr. Perry in the founding month 80 years ago of the California Council of the Blind, Catherine Skivers in her ongoing presentation of

historically relevant material submits the following address. Though longer than usual, I think you will find it well worth the space we give it.

Cathie writes, "The blind men and women of California and of the nation have been, in a very real sense, the beneficiaries of Dr. Newel Perry's lifetime of unceasing effort in their

behalf.

“Dr. Perry died in 1961. At a Memorial Convocation held at the California School for the Blind in Berkeley on March 25, 1961, Jacobus tenBroek delivered the address, entitled ‘Newel Perry Teacher of Youth and Leader of Men.’ This sensitive, perceptive tribute gives such an insight into the contribution of Dr. Newel Perry and into the character of his most distinguished student that it must be given in full.”]

“I come before you today indeed we are all gathered here to discharge a public duty and to honor a private debt. Newel Perry was a public figure. To us, he was also a personal friend.

We can appraise his public contribution. We can only acknowledge our private obligation and personal attachment. We can detail his public record, define his influential role, itemize his accomplishments, recount his deeds, enumerate his statutes, specify his doctrines, disentangle the elements of his social philosophy, identify the general and the institutional fruits of his life's work, analyze and psychoanalyze the personality traits that made him a leader. Upon the life we shared, we can only dwell in memory, sifting through the loose meshes of the mind, the hours, the days, the nights, the months, the years of our common experience; the fears, the travails, the aspirations, the laughter

that were ours together.

"We were his students, his family, his intimates, his comrades on a thousand battlefronts of a social movement. We slept in his house, ate at his table, learned geometry at his desk, walked the streets interminably at his side, moved forward on the strength of his optimism and confidence.

"The boundless devotion to him of his wife Lillie (to whom he was married from 1912 until her death in 1953), spilled over onto us to balm our institution-starved spirits, to lighten with gentle affection the bewilderment of our eccentricity and the unnatural confinement of our segregation. Upon a later generation of us, after

the death of Lillie the same bounty was conferred in her turn by his sister Emma Burnham, who lived with Doctor during the last 21 years of his life.

"As a forward youngster of 12, who made so bold as to address him as "Doc", I was once thrown out of a class by Doctor with such a lecture as still rings in my ears. As a somewhat older youngster, still forward but now also bored by the slow pace and the unimaginative techniques of high school, I was expelled by him altogether for incorrigible recalcitrance. Eventually, despite these unpromising beginnings, I did graduate from high school. With plenty of ambition but no money, I prepared to enter the University. At that point

I was denied state Aid to the Blind, a program then newly instituted as a result of Doctor's efforts in sponsoring a constitutional amendment and a comprehensive statute. The reason was not that my need was not great. It was that I intended to pursue a higher education while I was being supported by the state. That was too much for the administrative officials. Almost without discussion, Doctor immediately filled the gap. Just as Warring Wilkinson had earlier done for him, he supplied me with tuition and living expenses out of his own pocket for a semester while we all fought to reverse the decision of the state aid officials.

"It was ever thus with Doctor. The key to his great influence with blind students was, first of all, the fact that he was blind and therefore understood their problems, and second, that he believed in them and made his faith manifest. He provided the only sure foundation of true rapport: knowledge on our part that he was genuinely interested in our welfare.

"Aside from these immediate personal benefactions, there were three habits of life one might almost say three elements of personality which I formed out of his teaching and example when I was an adolescent in his charge. First: an attitude toward my blindness, a conception

that it is basically unimportant in the important affairs of life. A physical nuisance, yes! A topic of unembarrassed conversation, a subject of loud questions by small children in the street as you pass, certainly. But not something which shapes one's nature, which determines his career, which affects his usefulness or happiness. Second: a basic assumption that sighted people generally have boundless good will towards the blind and an utterly false conception of the consequences of blindness. Third: public activity as a rule of life, a sense of responsibility to exert personal effort to improve the lot of others. While I was still a lad in my teens, I was attending

meetings and doing work that Doctor assigned me in the blind movement. He was a social reformer. He made me one too.

Through participation with him, these attitudes and practices became habits of my life. So deeply instilled were they that they have remained ever after an almost automatic behavioral pattern potent and often governing factors in my outlook and activity. Mature reflection in later years could only confirm through reason what his influence had so surely wrought in my youth.

"It is altogether fitting that we should hold this memorial convocation at the California School for the Blind. It was here that Newel Perry came in 1883

as a ten-year-old boy penniless, blind, his father dead, his home dissolved.

“Two years earlier, he had lost his sight and nearly his life as a result of a case of poison oak which held him in a coma for a month. It was here at the School that

Warring Wilkinson first met and took and [sic] interest in him, laying the basis for future years of intimate relationship and mutual endeavor. Warring Wilkinson was the first principal of the California State School for the Deaf and the Blind. He served in that capacity for 44 years, from 1865 to 1909. With his characteristic interest in his charges, he soon saw young Newel's full potentiality.

“He sent him from here to Berkeley High School to complete his secondary education. It was he who overcame the numerous obstacles to this arrangement, so fruitful in its understanding of education and of the needs of the blind. Newel continued to live here at the School while he attended the University of California from 1892 to 1896. Again admission had to be secured over strong resistance. Again Wilkinson was the pathfinder, Newel his willing and anxious instrument. Wilkinson's role in Newel's life as a youth can hardly be overestimated: father, teacher, guide, supporter in Newel's own words, "Dear Governor".

"At this institution was not only the school but the home of his boyhood and the foundation of his manhood, so 16 years later, in 1912, at the age of 39, Newel Perry returned here to take up his permanent career as a teacher. He remained in that post until 1947 a third of a century. It was here that his life's work was accomplished. It was from this place as a base that he organized and conducted a movement for social reform. It was here that many of us first met him as his students. It was here that his impact upon us first made itself felt. It was here that our life long association with him began. How often in these halls have we heard his footsteps? How often in this chamber, his voice?

The sound of those footsteps and that voice have now gone from the world as a physical reality. How often hereafter will they continue to sound in the halls and chambers of our lives.

"In the years between departure from the School in 1896 and return to it in 1912, Newel Perry devoted himself to further education and to the search for an academic job. He took graduate work at the University of California, meanwhile serving successively as an unpaid teaching fellow, a paid assistant and finally as an Instructor in the Department of Mathematics. In 1900, following a general custom of that day, he went to Europe to continue his

studies. He did this for a time at the University of Zurich in Switzerland and then at the University of Munich in Germany. From the latter he secured the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Mathematics, with Highest Honors, in 1901. He lingered in Europe for a time traveling and writing an article on a mathematical topic which was published in a learned journal.

“He then returned to the United States in 1902, landing in New York where he was to remain until 1912. He had about \$80 in capital, a first-class and highly specialized education, and all the physical, mental and personal prerequisites for a productive career, save

one, visual acuity.

"During this period, he supported himself precariously as a private coach of university mathematics students. He applied himself, also, to the search for a university position. He had begun the process by mail from Europe even before he secured his Ph.D. He now continued the process on the ground in New York. He displayed the most relentless energy. He employed every imaginable technique. He wrote letters in profusion. In 1905, he wrote to 500 institutions of every size and character. He distributed his dissertation and published article. He haunted meetings of mathematicians. He visited his friends in the

profession. He enlisted the aid of his teachers. He called on anybody and everybody having the remotest connection with his goal.

"Everywhere, the outcome was the same. Only the form varied. Some expressed astonishment at what he had accomplished. Some expressed interest. One of these seemed genuine. He had a blind brother-in-law who, he said, was a whiz at math. Some showed indifference, now and then masked behind polite phrases. Some said there were no vacancies. Some said his application would be filed for future reference. One said for [sic] what ironically, as an encouragement to men who labor under

disadvantages and who may learn from it how much may be accomplished through resolution and industry. Some averred that they [sic] probably could succeed in teaching at somebody else's college. Many said outright that they believe a blind man could not teach mathematics.

"Many of these rejections were, of course, perfectly proper. Many were not. Their authors candidly gave the reason as blindness.

"We know about this period of Newel Perry's life from reports of contemporaries or near contemporaries such as Hugh Buckingham, a student at the School from

1896 to 1900 during Doctor's absence, who has prepared a manuscript about Doctor's boyhood and youth. We know about it from what Doctor told many of us in later years. But we know about it in all its poignancy, desolation and bleakness, from Newel Perry's own intimate accounts written at the time to his old mentor and true friend, Warring Wilkinson. These accounts, with copies of many of the letters of rejection, have been preserved by the Wilkinson family through the intervening years. In the last two weeks, they have been opened to my inspection by Wilkinson's granddaughter, Florence Richardson Wyckoff, who is here with us today.

"I have dwelt on this period and these experiences for several reasons. They reflect, they accurately portray, a phase in all our lives as blind people. In fact, thirty-five years later, I personally received identical letters from many of these same institutions. It was almost as if a secretary had been set to copying Doctor's file, only changing the signatures and the name of the addressee. Yet great progress has been made. Many of us are now teaching at colleges and universities around the country and filling many other jobs hitherto closed to us.

"Doctor Perry's reaction to this decade of defeat and privation was remarkable. He did not break. He did

not resign. He did not even become [sic] embittered. Discouragement, frustration, a sense of wrong and injustice, certainly these, but never collapse. He was not licked. We see in these bitter years of hunger and rejection the source of true knowledge about the real problems of the blind and an ineradicable determination to do something about them. Here was a mainspring of social reform, an ever-flowing motivation to redirect public attitudes and actions toward the blind. To this was added the thrust of an active and restless disposition and the wit to perceive remedies and adapt them to the need.

"Out of these elements of mind, personality and experience were compounded the public career of Newel Perry and out of these elements also were constructed the programs and initiation of which made that career publicly significant.

"First of all, the distress of poverty must be relieved. The necessities of life must be available. The minimum essentials must be assured. So much in some way had been provided in the Anglo-American system for three centuries before Newel Perry faced near starvation and economic exclusion in New York City. The Elizabethan Poor Laws did it in one way. County direct relief, instituted in California in 1901, did it in another. The

almshouse and the county hospital and poor farm did it in still other ways. At the very minimum, it had to be done better. It should be done by a system of cash grants, adequate in amount to maintain standards of eligibility, made generally applicable able [sic] by state participation and control, and expendable by the recipient through a free exercise of self-management and consumption choice. To bring this about, however, prohibitions in the state constitution would have [sic] be removed by the arduous process of a people's amendment, an organic statute would have to be lobbied through the state legislature, faithful administration would somehow have to be secured. Year-by-year and

session-by-session into the indefinite future, the myriad minor corrections and major improvements made necessary by time and disclosed by experience would have to be worked through the legislature and the administration. And so indeed it came to pass in California.

"Secondly, much more had to be done than merely relieve the distress of poverty. Security is a necessity. As an unmixed blessing, however, it is a stultifying concept. An indispensable ingredient of any welfare system is opportunity. One of the objects of public aid must be to stimulate and enable people to become independent of it. Accordingly, their initiative

must not be hemmed in. The means of productive activity must not be withdrawn or denied. Independence of action and self-reliance must be encouraged. Legal liability of relatives must be relaxed so as not to spread poverty, increase dependence and disrupt family life. Economic resources, reasonable amounts of real and personal property must be devotable to plans for self-support instead of being required to be consumed in meeting daily needs. Incentive to earn must be constructed out of retention of the benefits of earning. And this too presently came to pass in California. The new system took cognizance of the need of the blind for adjustments on the social

and psychological as well as the physical level. It permitted and encouraged them to strive to render themselves self-supporting. It applied the democratic principle of individual dignity to an underprivileged class of American citizens. It guaranteed them a fair measure of independence and self-respect in the conduct of their lives. The California system, the Newel Perry system, was thus far in advance of its time. It is still envied and emulated throughout the nation.

"Thirdly, the reintegration of the blind into society on a basis of full and equal membership could only be achieved if they had a chance to earn their daily bread as others do in the

community. Accordingly, action must be taken to eliminate restrictive barriers and legal discrimination. The main channels of opportunity must be swept clear of artificial and irrational obstructions. The public service, private employment, and common callings, the ordinary trades and occupations, the professions must be rescued from arbitrary exclusions based on blindness when blindness is not a factor bearing on competence and performance. Doctor was a prime mover in securing legal, constitutional and other provisions which: protect the right of the blind to enter a number of professions: forbid arbitrary discrimination against us in the state civil

service and in secondary teaching: enable blind college students to pursue their studies with the aid of sighted readers hired by the state: bring the blind in an ever increasing stream into the colleges and universities of the state and thence into the higher callings.

"These Achievements-- legal, social, economic and political have been the fruits at once of Doctor Perry's leadership and of the collective self-organization of the blind which that leadership engendered. More than any other person, it was Doctor who implanted and nurtured among the blind of California the sense of common cause, the spirit of collaborative effort in seeking solutions to our

problems. More than any other person, it was he who taught us that the blind can and must lead the blind and the sighted, too, when dealing with the problems of the blind. More than any other person, it was he who made us aware that to go on unorganized was to remain disorganized, that only through concerted action can the blind hope to convert and enlist the power of government and to defeat the thoughtless tyranny of public prejudice and opportune ignorance.

"Newel Perry was a teacher: a teacher of subject matter and a teacher of men. He taught his specialty of mathematics and taught it very well indeed; but he taught his pupils even

better. To be sure, not all the students who came his way during his 35 years on this campus were wholly inspired by him. His personality was vigorous and his standards rigorous. But for many of us who attended the School during those three and a half decades it was Doctor Perry who furnished the impetus and incentive, the goad and the goal, that would light our later lives and nourish our careers. Our bond with him was not broken when our schooldays ended. We went on to become his comrades and colleagues in the cause which was always his true vocation.

"Newel Perry was, in short, both a teacher of youth and a leader of

men. These two roles were not, however, quite separate. For the secret of his success in both of them lay in this: that his teaching was a kind of leadership, and in his social purpose Doctor was thoroughly Socratic. His classroom manner was essentially that of the Platonic dialogue: dialectical, inquiring, insistently logical and incessantly prodding.

"In this Socratic combination also lies, I think, the secret of Doctor's success as the leader of a social movement. Just as in the classroom he taught his students by leading them, so as the pioneer of the organized blind movement he led his followers by teaching

them. His power, like that of all leaders, rested in the last analysis on persuasion. His triumphs, however, were not the product of oratorical or literary skill, although he had a notable gift for trenchant and incisive phrasing, the epigrammatic thrust which distills the essence of a complex issue. His persuasive power was not that of the demagogue but of the pedagogue. And it was not only his followers who learned from him. He educated the general public by his preachment and his example to regard the blind not in the traditional terms of charity and custody but in the realistic terms of normality and equality.

"And most of all, in his role as leader, Newel Perry

educated, indoctrinated and persuaded a distinguished group of cohorts to join him in carrying on the struggle and carrying out its goals. Those whom Doctor fathered around him were blind men and women, mostly former students, whose special talents and professional positions uniquely supplemented his.

"Raymond Henderson: by profession an attorney, self taught, by preoccupation a reformer, with poetry in his soul and literature in his stylus. Born in 1881, he attended this School from 1889 through high school and continued to live here until his graduation from the University of California in 1914. He practiced his profession in Bakersfield,

California from his admission to the Bar until his death in 1945.

Raymond came to the organized blind movement in his maturity from a long background of experience in other causes. He brought to it a notable array of personal abilities, a high degree of professional skill, a fine spirit of humanity and the enrichment of wide and intensive activity.

"Leslie Schlingheyde: also by profession an attorney, gentle and religious by disposition, practical rather than reflective in frame of mind, with a brilliant academic record and a liberal outlook. He was born in 1893, attended this School from 1906 to 1913, and thus came under Doctor's influence in the

year of his graduation. He received a J.D. from the Law School of the University of California in 1920 and from that time until his death in 1957 practiced his profession in Modesto, California, and served the blind movement all over the state.

"It was Raymond Henderson and Leslie Schlingheyde who were primarily responsible for handling cases in court, for preparing innumerable legal briefs and arguments, for drafting projected bills and constitutional amendments, for continuous legal counsel during the insurgent and formative years. They were in a real sense the legal arm of the organized blind movement.

"Ernest Crowley: again by profession an attorney but distinguished for his service in another area. He kept a law office open in Fairfield-Suisun from the time of his graduation from the University of California Law School in 1923 until his death in 1952. To him, however, the law was only a necessary and not a particularly attractive means of earning a living. His law office was a cover for his real love and active life--the practice of politics. He was born in 1896 and attended this School from 1910 to 1916. He was thus under Doctor's tutelage as a student for four years. His significant contribution was made as a member of the State Legislature from 1928 to 1952. It was he who introduced and skillfully

maneuvered through to passage the memorable bills which are now the statutory landmarks of our movement. In a very real sense, he was the legislative spokesman and arm of the movement.

“Perry Sundquist: social worker and public administrator by profession, bringing to his work a sympathetic personality, an unshakable faith in blind people and skillful management of administrative techniques and devices. He was born in 1904 and attended this School from 1918 to 1922.

For exactly twenty years now he has been Chief of the Division for the Blind in the State Department of Social

Welfare. During those two decades he has translated the principles of the organized blind movement into concrete administrative action, from legislative parchment into practical reality. Under his direction programs for the blind have multiplied and prospered, services have been expanded and their benefits spread. Most important of all, the working philosophy of the movement has been transformed into a working practice. In a very real sense, he has been the effective administrative arm of the movement.

"Through the years this little band grew in numbers and evolved in formal structure. It formed the nucleus of the California Council of the Blind,

which came into being in 1934 with Doctor Perry as its first president. For 19 productive years, until his retirement in 1953 at the age of 80, Doctor forged and shaped the Council on the anvil of his own will into an instrument larger and more formidable but essentially similar to the informal group from which it originated.

"Doctor's social vision in the field of blind welfare outdistanced his time and placed him in the advance guard of thought and planning. His liberality of these matters gains, rather than loses in significance when it is placed alongside his broader attitudes toward politics and human affairs for in matters unrelated to

the blind, Doctor was fully an heir of the 19th century, conservative, even reactionary, by nature, often inflexible and not without a touch of old-fashioned nationalist imperialism. When it came to the cause to which he was most committed, he was far less a Victorian than a Utopian--less a stand pater than a restless progressive in search of new horizons.

"How shall we sum up a man's life? How capture the essential quality of a human career? How convey the inward meaning, the imponderable and intangible qualities of will and heart and spirit? There are the vital statistics. But they are more statistical than vital.

All that they can tell us of a man is that he was born, he lived, he loved, he died. For Newel Perry we must amend the litany at least this much: he lived, and he brought new life to many; he loved, and he was beloved; he died, and he will not be forgotten.

“On the day following the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Walter Lippman wrote some words about him which might also stand as an epitaph to the leader and comrade whom we honor today: 'The man

must die in his appointed time. He must carry away with him the magic of his presence and that personal mastery of affairs which no man, however gifted by nature, can acquire except in the relentless struggle with evil and blind chance. Then comes the proof of whether his work will endure, and the test of how well he led his people. The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and the will to carry on.'”

California Council of the Blind (CCB)

Strategic Plan 2013 - 2016

by Board of Directors

[Editor’s Note: From President Jeff Thom:

Whether you are a Fortune 500 company or a small

nonprofit like CCB, without a rudder to guide the ship, you are at great risk of floundering and running a-ground. That is why the CCB Board of Directors, under the leadership of President Pomerantz, has adopted a strategic plan that contains specific goals and objectives that, if we can achieve them, will enable us, over the next few years, to expand our financial resources, increase membership, improve the way we run our organization, and, in general, become better able to improve the lives of Californians who are blind or have low vision. Achievement of these goals and objectives will take commitment and effort from all of us. Taskforces are being established to spearhead the implementation of each goal in the strategic plan. Thus, I urge you to take a close look at the elements of the strategic plan and determine in what ways you can help in its implementation.

This issue contains the first goal. The other 3 will follow in subsequent issues.]

MISSION

After some discussion about the Mission of CCB, the Mission Statement was modified to read as follows: The Mission of the California Council of the Blind (CCB) is to gain full independence and equality of opportunity for all blind and low vision Californians. This revised Mission Statement should be approved by the Board and substituted for the present Mission in all documents and

on the website.

GOAL #1

To implement a resource development strategy to end the erosion of our resources.

Objective #1: The Easy Stuff – Doable Without Cost			
Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Maximize website for more effective fundraising	Webmaster		Minimal/volunteer time
A.1. Construct a better and repeating throughout website a “Donate” button	Webmaster	September 1, 2014	Minimal/volunteer time
B. Revise and/or create marketing opportunities to increase funds	Task Force		None
B.1 Solicit Ads on website and in publications	Task Force	July 1, 2014 – ongoing	None
C. Seek bequests by subscribing to the estate lawyers “book”	Task Force	May 1, 2014	Minimal
D. Strongly promote monthly automatic giving	Task Force Initiated	Major initiative to Begin July	Volunteer time

(MMS for members & general public)		1, 2014-ongoing	
E. Identify needs and seek in-kind giving	Board/Staff identify needs, Task Force explores sources	As needs are identified – potential donors sought	Volunteer time July 1, 2014-ongoing
F. Find a successful nonprofit to “mentor” CCB	Task Force gathers potential nonprofit ideas from Board/Members and makes request	October 1, 2014-ongoing	Volunteer time

Objective #2: Better utilizing people resources

Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Develop a relationship with SCORE	Task Force	August 15, 2014-ongoing	None
B. Form an Advisory Council for business advice and financial support (Chair & Treasurer ex officio)	Task Force coordinates with help from CCB’s CPA and others with desired skills/contacts Contact CPA solicit his help, write a	January 1, 2016 hold first Council Meeting Chaired by Task Force Member	None

	job description and begin formulating a membership list.		
C. Attempt to find a corporation that would loan us an executive	Task Force, Don to contact Cisco when asked, Advisory Council	On Agenda for 1st Council Mtg. January 1, 2016	None
D. Create a "Friends of CCB" who become regular donors	Task Force	None	
Objective #3: Hire a fulltime Executive Director/Fund Raiser			
Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Explore the feasibility of using our temporarily restricted funds	Task Force with friendly attorney	July 2013 begin investigation	Minimal
B. Construct a strong case, supported by the Board, for the need to hire	Task Force & Board	September 2013	None
C. Write Job Description and proceed with hiring process	Task Force & Board	October 2013	None

D. Develop specific objectives for ED's year one	Task Force & Board approval	November 2013	None
E. Hire ED/Fundraiser	Board	December 2013	Approximately \$75K/yr
F. Evaluate ED's performance to date	Task Force/Board	July 2014	None

Objective #4: More aggressively explore business opportunities

Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Obtain contracts or consulting opportunities using our unique skills and knowledge	Task Force	October 1, 2015	None
B. Explore operating a business to generate income (like CSB's Braille fortune cookies)	Task Force & Advisory Council	April 1, 2015 preliminary report	None
C. Purchase an income-producing piece of real estate	Task Force & Advisory Council	January 1, 2017	None

Objective #5: Fundraising initiatives

Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Continue to actively grow Mutt	Task Force with Mutt	May 19, 2014-	None unless a

Strut	Strut Coordinators	ongoing	professional promoter is hired
B. Identify a second big fundraiser to compliment Mutt Strut	Task Force with input from Membership & Board	January 1, 2015	None
C. Find “angel charities” who will donate a portion of their fundraising events to CCB	Task Force and Advisory Council	July 1, 2015	None
D. Apply for a capacity building grant of approximately \$150K	Task Force research possibilities and perhaps hire grant writer on contract basis		Cost of grant writer approximately \$20K or less
E. Conduct cost/benefit analysis of all current and future fundraisers	Task Force	November 1, 2014	None

**California Council of the Blind
2014 Officers and Board**

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

President, Jeff Thom (14-16 1st term)

Sacramento, CA 95831

916-995-3967 c

jeff.thom@ccbnet.org

1st Vice President, Eugene Lozano, Jr. (*14-16 4th term)

Sacramento, CA 95841

eugene.lozano@ccbnet.org

2nd Vice President, Roger Petersen (*13-15 2nd term)

Mountain View, CA 94040

650-969-1688 h

roger.petersen@ccbnet.org

Secretary, Judy Wilkinson (13-15 1st term)

San Leandro, CA 94577

510-388-5079 c

judy.wilkinson@ccbnet.org

Treasurer, Peter Pardini (14-16 3rd term)

Mill Valley, CA 94941

415-990-9202 c

peter.pardini@ccbnet.org

Immediate Past President, Donna Pomerantz (14-??)

Pasadena, CA 1106-3036

626-844-4388 h

donna.pomerantz@ccbnet.org

Board of Directors

Ardis Bazyn (*13-15 2nd term)

Burbank, CA 91504

ardis.bazyn@ccbnet.org

Vincent Calderon (*14-16 4th term)

Montclair, CA 91763

626 429-4539 c

vince.calderon@ccbnet.org

Leena Dawes (*14-16 3rd term)

Sacramento, CA 95818

916 905-9034 c

leena.dawes@ccbnet.org

Paul Patche Jr. (14-16 1st term)

**Sacramento CA, 95833
916-662-0861 c
paul.patche@ccbnet.org**

**Linda Porelle (13-15 3rd term)
San Francisco, CA 94112
415-577-8437 c
linda.porelle@ccbnet.org**

**John Ross (13-15 1st term)
Bakersfield, CA 93306
661-619-5863 c
john.ross@ccbnet.org**

**Frank Welte (14-16 1st term)
San Leandro, CA 94577
510-541-1442 c
frank.welte@ccbnet.org**

**Robert Wendt (13-15 2nd term)
Long Beach, CA 90814
562-438-7100 h
robert.wendt@ccbnet.org**

**Vita Zavoli (13-15 1st term)
San Leandro, CA 94577
vita.zavoli@ccbnet.org**

Publications Committee

Linda Porelle, Chair
San Francisco, CA 94112
415-577-8437 c
linda.porelle@ccbnet.org

Judy Wilkinson, Editor
San Leandro, CA 94577
510-357-1844 h
editor@ccbnet.org

Other Members:

Annette Carter
Susan Glass
Mike Keithley
Roger Petersen
Bonnie Rennie
Donna Sanchez
Dr. Catherine Schmitt Whitaker