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Recommended length is under three pages or 1800 words.

The deadline to submit material for the Spring 2015 issue of THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN is noon on February 15, 2015.

Please send all address changes to Executive Office.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Money and Members Part 1 Jeff Thom, CCB President	5
Awards Everyone! Roger Petersen, Awards Committee Chair	10
CCB Chapter Spotlight: Orange County Susan Glass, Associate Editor	13
Governmental Affairs Report Mitch Pomerantz	18
One of Ours: Celebrating the Accomplishments of Dr. Martin Jones Catherine Skivers and Susan Glass.....	22
A Harvest of Hope: New CCB E-Book Offers Support and Solutions to Seniors Bonnie Rennie.....	24
Visiting the Legislature Charles Nabarrete	27
Toshiko Tekawa Elizabeth Enright.....	30
WAM: Cane and Able Bev Clifford	32
Lynda Ruth Bardis: 10-8-1942—9-14-2014 Judy Wilkinson	37
California Council of the Blind (CCB) Strategic Plan 2013 - 2016 by Board of Directors	42
California Council of the Blind 2014 Officers and Board ..	60

Money and Members Part 1

Jeff Thom, CCB President

The life blood of a nonprofit membership organization such as the California Council of the Blind can be summed up in one little phrase, “money and members.” Since the phrase has two essential elements, I will examine them one at a time. Next month I’ll discuss the often frustrating issue of fundraising, and specifically what part we as the membership of this organization can and must play in raising revenue for CCB.

That leaves this column to look at the recruitment and retention of members. Anyone who

has either read this magazine in recent years or has attended CCB conventions is aware of the concerns expressed by many of us relating to membership. People, including those of us who are blind or have low vision, aren’t joining organizations the way they used to. Unions, chambers of commerce, fraternal organizations, environmental groups, (the list goes on), are all struggling to retain their members and recruit new ones. Many of our chapters and affiliates, albeit definitely not all, have slowly been the victim of that trend. However I don’t intend to

go into any detail on this trend. Suffice it to say that we need to find ways of becoming one of those entities that slaps that trend aside by doing everything we can to recruit and retain members for CCB. Because the alternative is to passively accept a slow decline in the real backbone of our organization: its members.

At the outset let me acknowledge that this article doesn't represent visionary and original thinking on my part. Much of what I have to say comes from talking to people within and outside of CCB, with two of the most knowledgeable

being past ACB and CCB president Mitch Pomerantz and current ACB and CCB membership chair Ardis Bazyn. It is always important to have visionary and out-of-the-box thinking, but it is at least as important to have elbow grease, and if this article is to have any worth, the hard work of all of us needs to happen.

First, what can we do as individuals? We can use our every-day contacts with folks who are blind or have low vision to recruit members. When you talk to a friend or even a stranger on a bus or paratransit ride, do you mention your involvement with CCB

and how important the organization is and that it has a place for everyone? When you are communicating via email or telephone, does CCB come into the conversation when you are messaging or talking with nonmembers? If the answer to these questions is no, then you need to think about how important CCB is to you. Because if it does have a meaningful place in your life, then why shouldn't you advertise that fact to other people who are blind or have low vision? After all, if you are proud to be a member of this CCB family, then why not try to give as many Californians with visual impairments the chance

to share what we have.

Secondly, what can your chapter do? In this instance I am referring to not only recruitment of new members, but also retention of existing ones, and even regaining those who have dropped out. One important element over which the chapter as a whole has control is making the chapter environment a welcoming one for everyone. Harkening back to my previous column, this is where the dynamic of social gatherings and events can be extremely helpful.

Another important factor in membership retention is finding a niche for

every member. A good leader is someone who recognizes that everyone not only has strengths but also tasks that they enjoy doing. It isn't easy to accomplish, but the chapter leadership needs to work very hard at finding the tasks within the chapter's structure that your members will enjoy doing and perform well. Remember that leaders should be willing to put in the hard work of mentoring other members and that they shouldn't expect miraculous results when someone is first given a new responsibility. Allowing people to fail and learn from that failure is the mark of a good leader.

It goes without saying that when chapter activities (both during meetings and in the community) are those that members either enjoy or find important, the potential for retaining members increases. My own chapter, for example, is beginning the process of its second chapter survey. This can be an excellent tool for finding out whether the chapter is going in a direction that people like, or whether changes may need to be made.

Let me finish with some comments about what can be done at the state level to help in the effort to recruit and retain members. Without

question, CCB's limited financial resources preclude many potential initiatives that could be of great help. I'll cite just two examples. When resources were more plentiful during the early years of my first time as president, I was able to make visits to chapters throughout the state. I really felt that these visits gave a boost to the chapters, and I think that the lack of such visits during my latter years as president and during the term of President Pomerantz was extremely regrettable. Secondly, if we had sufficient resources we could at least explore the potential for giving added benefits to our members. However

there is no need to dwell on what can't be done right now; rather let's talk about what we can do.

One area that CCB has consistently tried to do all that it can for members and nonmembers alike is in assisting with advocacy concerns. All of you can help in this regard by referring people to us, by letting us know if there are ways in which you feel you can help in specific areas of advocacy and by letting us know ways in which we can improve. The Blind Californian and our annual conference and convention also both serve as mechanisms to promote membership retention and recruitment.

If you feel that either the BC or our conference and convention can serve this goal in an even better way, let us know. If you have other ideas on how we can supplement your local membership efforts, please give us your input.

However as I stated at the beginning, ideas without elbow grease aren't worth very much. Let's accept the challenge and make CCB a showcase for how to grow a membership organization. If we have the will, then we shall succeed. -----

Awards Everyone!

Roger Petersen, Awards Committee Chair

Once again and it is time for us to start preparing for our annual CCB awards. The organization presents several awards to deserving individuals and groups at our annual conference and convention. Some are presented by the Awards Committee and some are given by others. Besides

the Committee's awards, the Publications and Membership Committees give awards. The former presents writing awards usually based on articles written for the BC and chosen by the committee. The only part the general membership might play in this process would be to recommend an article for

consideration that appeared in some other publication.

The latter presents the Chapter of the Year Award to the chapter that conducts a group effort to make a significant difference in the life of an individual and/or the community. Letters from chapters for projects developed and completed in 2014 should be submitted to the CCB state office by February 15, 2015. In the letter, please explain the group chapter project, who benefited from the effort, and the time-line of the project. In 2014, this award went to the Humboldt Chapter for its

work on bringing audio-described movies to Eureka.

Win one of the CCB Membership Incentive Awards for 2014! Awards will be presented to the chapter with the largest number of new members, and the other to the chapter with the largest membership percentage increase.

Here's how you play a part in the presentation of awards by the Awards Committee. We need you to submit letters to the CCB office nominating people for these awards, so we will be presenting them to the most deserving people

possible. These letters are due by February 15, 2015.

Here are the awards and their criteria.

The CCB Hall of Fame: up to five persons per year who have made significant contributions and sustained effort to advance the goals of CCB over a period of years may be nominated.

The CCB Community Service Award: presented annually to a blind or visually-impaired individual who, through his or her association and activities, has demonstrated integration into and interaction with the life of the community.

The CCB Distinguished Service Award: given periodically to an outstanding blind or visually-impaired person who has contributed significantly to the betterment of blind people in general. The recipient of this award need not be a member of CCB.

The CCB Legislator of the Year Award: bestowed periodically on a state or federal legislator who has introduced and successfully directed enactment of legislation on behalf of persons who are blind or visually-impaired.

The Humanitarian Award:

granted to an individual or organization that has assisted blind people in general or CCB and its affiliates in particular to an extraordinary degree. The recipient may be blind or sighted.

The CCB Merit Award (Formerly the Certificate of Merit): given to any individual who provides

outstanding volunteer service to CCB, its chapters or affiliates.

In closing, let me thank the members of the Awards Committee who have made the difficult decisions we must make: Susan Hyatt, Mary Beth Randall, and Michael Williams.

CCB Chapter Spotlight: Orange County

Susan Glass, Associate Editor

[Editor's Note: We're inaugurating a new column in this issue of the BC called "Chapter Spotlight." Its purposes are many: to increase awareness of, and networking among our

various CCB chapters; to share strategies for growing membership and for fund-raising; to celebrate chapter accomplishments and achievements of individuals within

chapters; to deepen our knowledge of CCB's history throughout the state; to promote projects that advance the personal and professional well-being of blind Californians. Each BC will feature a different chapter, and we'll alternate between profiling chapters from the northern and southern parts of the state. Let's begin our tour in Orange County.]

Ask third-time chapter president Andrea Pitsenbarger what she most celebrates about her Orange County constituents, and the sound waves sparkle with her enthusiastic reply. "We have an excellent,

hard-working board, and many of our chapter members are professional people. At least two work in technology fields, and two are retired social workers. Having professionals in your membership can encourage blind people who want careers but appreciate a bit of mentoring."

It turns out that blind professionals have lead the Orange County chapter since its founding by Coletta Davis in 1986. Bonnie Rennie, who joined the chapter in 1989, fondly remembers a number of seminars organized by then President Davis.

"Coletta Davis at one time worked for the governor of Hawaii as coordinator of disabled services," says Bonnie. "She had a knack for convincing people to come speak to us about relevant issues, and she had many contacts at the Braille Institute and other local organizations. She'd organize these day-long dress-up affairs where chapter members would gather to learn things: education, legislation, interviewing. She mobilized people. In the earliest days, she even held chapter meetings in her home."

The Orange County chapter has enjoyed strong leadership ever

since, and both Andrea and Bonnie describe it as a powerful chapter where camaraderie abounds.

Another strength, says Andrea, is a fund-raising strategy that the chapter has adopted. "We network with other organizations in our community who are also having fund-raisers. Certain of our chapter members know people at the Braille Institute, AA and a number of senior centers. They are our points of contact. We attend events sponsored by their organizations, and they in turn attend ours. We just completed a fund-raiser at Chilis Restaurant in Anaheim. We called it a "give back"

night. People purchased a meal, and a certain percentage of their bill was donated back to the chapter."

Currently CCB's Orange County affiliate has 19 members. Each quarter features one meeting dedicated to a speaker, panel or presentation, one special event or field trip, and one business meeting. In October, for instance, a contact from The League of Women Voters addressed the chapter on the upcoming election, its candidates and its issues. Another meeting found members visiting a local bird sanctuary. Some meetings combine chapter business with a

speaker presentation. Bonnie recalls that past meetings featured what she called member driven "corners." A book corner for instance, would be a meeting where members discussed a book they'd all read, or recommended titles to one another. A tech corner would be a meeting where people shared their latest technology, and a hobby corner would be a meeting or portion of a meeting dedicated to members sharing personal interests.

I asked what projects President Pitsenbarger hopes her chapter might undertake, and she replied that she'd like to see them campaign for

more audio described films in more theaters. She'd also like to raise the sighted public's awareness of audio description and its benefits.

"What does your chapter need most," I asked both Andrea and Bonnie, "And how can CCB help your chapter meet that need?"

"We need to recruit younger members," said Andrea. "We, along with the rest of CCB, are an aging organization. On both local and state levels, we need to evolve ways of attracting upcoming generations of blind and visually impaired people."

Bonnie agreed. "We've

got to find issues that interest potential new members. We need more communication throughout the state. It might help individual chapters if there were regular presidents' meetings, and chapter presidents brought information from those meetings back to their respective chapters. Members in local chapters need to learn more about what CCB committees do."

Both Andrea and Bonnie thanked CCB and the Orange County affiliate for connecting them to a blind community. As children and college students, they had received a mainstream

education, and spent much of their adult life with sighted people.

"CCB offers connections to blind friends from the past," said Andrea, "as well as opportunities to forge new friendships and professional relationships."

"CCB has done so much for me," said Bonnie.

"They gave me a

scholarship when I was a student, and there was even a student chapter one year when I was in school. CCB taught me much about self advocacy. That's what people who aren't members now need to understand: what CCB has done for so many already, and what it can do for them." -----

Governmental Affairs Report

Mitch Pomerantz

As I write this in mid-November, the CCB Governmental Affairs Committee met last week to consider advocacy initiatives for 2015, as well as other related matters. Beginning in

December, proposed legislation may be introduced so it is definitely time to "get on the stick," as they say.

It appears that our proposal to include some

reader service and document completion within the IHSS (In-Home Support Services) program will be reintroduced; this time with our suggested language more specifically defining who would be eligible for such service. With luck and a bit of effort, this bill will be in the hopper by the time you read this.

In 2014, the State Department of Rehabilitation—with input from the Blind Advisory Committee (BAC)—drafted a “State Price Schedule”: a document whose intent is to make the process of acquiring technology and other services for clients more

timely and efficient. As a relatively new member of the BAC (although I previously served on it during the late ‘80’s), I can tell you that serious deficiencies in this policy still exist. Based on a previously-passed CCB resolution, we will be looking for a sponsor for legislation to at least make a start toward resolving some of those deficiencies.

With the concurrence of Guide Dog Users of California (GDUC), we are looking to introduce legislation proposing some changes to and within the State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind. Introduction of such legislation may by

necessity have to be delayed until 2016 due to a number of factors, so continue to read this column to learn where matters stand.

I should also mention here that CCB is in the process of joining a coalition of groups within California whose purpose is to pressure the State to restore its former State Supplementary Program (SSP) share of SSI benefits. Currently California provides the absolute minimum required by the federal government and this coalition effort is geared toward increasing the SSP amount by something close to \$100 monthly. This will likely be a long term effort,

given the existing fiscal climate, even within a very blue state such as California.

And speaking of matters national, we are preparing to participate in the 2015 ACB Legislative Seminar, taking place on Monday and Tuesday, February 23 and 24 in Washington DC. Assuming you are reading this sometime in early to mid-January, we're interested in hearing from those who would like to attend. Unfortunately CCB is not in a position to cover your expenses. What we are looking for are individuals who can: 1) independently make appointments with members of Congress; 2) attend two or more

telephonic meetings between now and the Seminar in order to finalize logistics for our visit to Capitol Hill taking place on Tuesday the 24th); 3) commit to a face-to-face meeting the evening prior to our Hill visit to handle last-minute schedule changes (this will necessitate the ability to take and read notes); and 4) be willing and able to travel with or without a sighted guide while on the Hill; (ACB makes every effort to have a sufficient number of volunteers on hand, but that isn't always possible). If you think this sounds like something you'd like to do, please contact me either via email:

mitch.pomerantz@earthlink.net or phone: 626-844-4388.

We are also seeking input from our members relative to your interest in coming to Sacramento, probably during March, to participate in a CCB Capitol Day. Again we are unable to cover your travel expenses, but with a goodly number of new legislators, this is the best way to get our advocacy message out on behalf of the California Council of the Blind. Please use the above email address and/or telephone number to indicate your interest in participating in a proposed Capitol Day. -----

**One of Ours: Celebrating the
Accomplishments of Dr. Martin Jones
Catherine Skivers and Susan Glass**

[Associate Editor's Note: I would like to thank Cathie Skivers for suggesting this article, and for providing the information that made writing it possible.]

An old proverb holds that when you want to get a job done well, you assign it to a busy person, or, metaphorically speaking, assign it to the person wearing the most hats. That description of productivity suits CCB's Dr. Martin Jones well. He's a psychologist, a father, a counselor, a teacher, a mentor, a musician, a volunteer,

and a tireless advocate. Since 1963, we in CCB have been the fortunate recipients of his many talents.

Martin Jones was born in New Orleans and has been blind for nearly all his life. He came to California in 1963, at which point he joined the organized blind movement and has been active in it ever since. A long time member of the Golden Gate chapter, he has served for decades on CCB's Personnel and Scholarship Committees. Anyone attending Sunday devotional services at

CCB conventions recognizes his inspired speaking and singing voice. He was instrumental in founding CCB's Anti Domestic Violence Program, an interest which undoubtedly had its roots in his work as a psychologist for the San Francisco sheriff's office, his teaching men with criminal backgrounds, and his volunteer work with Mentoring For Men, an organization that he founded, which helps men coming out of prison reintegrate themselves into society.

Dr. Jones has 8 children and he's financed a college education for all 8 of them. At one point 4 of

his daughters were attending college simultaneously. His good friend Kathy Skivers asked him how he managed to make that happen. His answer typifies both his faith and his humility. "You eat a lot of bread and butter, and you pray a lot," he said.

Although he officially retired this past September, after 40 years of working as a professional psychologist, Dr. Jones still volunteers two days every week in the Mentoring for Men program. He currently serves as a director on three boards: Good Will, The Episcopal Church, and the Alliance Blind

Center. He sings with the San Francisco Labor Chorus and is an accomplished trumpet player.

One definition of a good leader is someone who

builds a sound foundation for our present life here on earth and also shines as a beacon for our future. Dr. Jones, you are such a leader. We in CCB thank you and honor you. -----

A Harvest of Hope: New CCB E-Book Offers Support and Solutions to Seniors

Bonnie Rennie

Imagine you're an active senior citizen looking forward to enjoying the fruits of your labor. But now you find yourself on a terrifying journey: the loss of some or all of the eyesight you've depended on all of your life. What do you do! How do you cope with the emotional and practical aspects of life beyond loss?

Enter the new e-book, written by the California Council of the Blind's Seniors with Vision Loss Committee. The book's self-explanatory title is "How to Have a Happy Life: As a Senior Losing or Without Vision." The committee's goals are to encourage and empower seniors who are blind or who have low vision. We

also seek to educate their families, friends, and the public regarding our concerns and capabilities. We've found that one way to spread our positive message is through the creation and distribution of literature. Note our previous publication, "Failing Sight and the Family Plight."

In "How to Have a Happy Life...", a woman tells her story of vision loss in terms that our target audience can likely relate to. Our narrator was fully sighted, a rather feisty grandmother, active in her community. She takes readers through her initial fears and struggles; then describes her happier ending. She achieves

constructive attitudes, needed skills, community integration, and acceptance of her new visual status. Her message is that others who want to, and who make the effort, can too.

The book emphasizes that such success is usually a long, uneven process, touching on such issues as grief after a loss, relationships with one's partner and wider circle, overcoming attitudinal barriers. In order to heighten the impact of these points, the book contains illustrations. Our narrator acknowledges that there are many ways to respond to vision loss, and numerous factors

come into play. Fortunately our heroine has many friends whose vignettes provide several clear examples of the diversity of coping styles. These peers highlight such differences as whether or not they desire to acquire and use independent living skills.

This book, written from the perspective of a legally blind peer, can be used in a variety of ways. It was primarily intended to be read by seniors, their families and friends, ideally together, providing a springboard for positive discussion. The story lends itself to conversations in support groups for those with visual impairments. The

Council could potentially offer seminars or structured conference calls based on going through, and helping participants digest and benefit from, the material presented.

"How to Have a Happy Life..." can be downloaded and/or printed (70 pages including wonderful graphics) from our CCB website, www.ccbnet.org. The new publication, as well as "Failing Sight..." can be reached by going to the home page, and clicking on the Resources link. Funding and opportunity permitting, we would like to someday produce audio CD, large

print, and other formats. Many newly visually impaired seniors have not yet gained sufficient computer skills to go online and read the document independently.

We hope that our CCB members will first read, and then help us get the word out about this new resource. Perhaps individuals or chapters would distribute the flyer promoting the book, also found on our website's

Resources page. Those who've been blind or had low vision for all or most of their lives may not relate to the entire experience of the woman portrayed in this publication. But then, it was not written for those of us who are "pros" at this "legal blindness thing." We who are comfortable on and familiar with this road can help those new on the road to find their way. -----

Visiting the Legislature

Charles Nabarrete

[One of the consequences of having only one CCB convention per year may be the elimination of the "Day at

the legislature" event, which would detrimentally affect the advocacy efforts of CCB. CCB advocacy efforts will

then be limited to having representatives give testimony or presentations to legislative committees and letter writing and phone contacts by members, instead of having CCB members descend on the legislature to inform legislators and their staff face to face of the issues important to the blind community.

The face-to-face contact method is traditionally used by lobbyists because it is effective. CCB does not have the resources to hire a member to advocate at Sacramento and cannot

make significant financial contributions to individual legislator's electoral campaigns. Representing a low incidence disability, CCB cannot command the attention of such groups as cyclists; the mobility impaired who are in wheelchairs and seniors.

I have participated in several visits to the legislature by CCB members and believe that these efforts were effective and left a strong impression with the legislators and staff that we visited. At the last convention about 10 CCB members participated and were able to contact

about 80 offices. We discussed three issues with the people we spoke with and were successful with regard to blocking the Governor's plan to have the production of braille and large print books prepared by local school districts instead of by the state's Department Of Education. CCB's effectiveness and success to effect legislative changes which will benefit the blind community will be diminished if the CCB members do not visit the legislature as a group in the future.

Because our conference/ convention will be held in

Southern California in 2015, we won't be holding an official legislature visit day in conjunction with our event. But many CCB members could arrange to travel to Sacramento and return home on the same day that they visit the legislature. [Editor's Note: See Mitch Pomerantz's Governmental Affairs Report for information on a possible Capitol Day event.] Although only about 10 CCB members may participate, this year's experience demonstrates that having personal contact with the legislators or their staff is invaluable and effective.

Toshiko Tekawa**Elizabeth Enright**

[Editor's Note: I was in "Miss Tekawa's" first second grade class at the California School for the Blind. I remember her reading us stories, my getting in trouble for coming in late after recess, and I may never forgive her for enlightening me about the nonexistence of Santa Claus. Even then she was helping us adapt to the real world. She was a long-time member of CCB's Bay View Chapter.]

September 29, 1922-
October 17, 2014

Toshiko (Toshi) Tekawa passed away on the afternoon of Friday,

October 17, 2014 after an extended illness. She had recently celebrated her 92nd birthday. She had been a resident at Piedmont Gardens in Oakland, California since 2001, moving there from Berkeley, her home for all of her adult life.

Toshi was born in Oakland to Seizo and Kura Tekawa. Her father had a small store in West Oakland. By the time she was school age the family had moved to Berkeley, and she attended Berkeley schools, graduating from Berkeley High shortly before the United States entered World War II. She began her college career

at UC Berkeley, but was forced to drop out during her sophomore year when West Coast Japanese Americans were sent to relocation camps away from the Pacific Ocean. The Tekawas were sent to Topaz, Utah. Eventually Toshi was invited by Huron College in Huron, South Dakota to come there and continue her college education. She was unable to visit her parents, but did find a summer job in a settlement house in Chicago, Illinois. She graduated from Huron and returned in 1945 to Berkeley.

After getting settled once again in the Bay Area, Toshi began work on a Master's degree program

at San Francisco State, majoring in Special Education, with an emphasis on teaching the visually impaired. In the meantime, she worked in a child-care facility in Hayward. In 1951 she began teaching second grade at the California School for the Blind, which was then just south of the Cal campus in Berkeley. She was promoted to Principal in 1961, a position she held until her retirement. She was much loved by the many young children who learned skills such as making butter, and who always looked forward to the children's classics she read to them during the last half-hour of each school day.

Toshi was a very active member of the Berkeley Methodist United Church for almost 75 years. She was superintendent of the Sunday school from 1945 to 1980. She served as both chairperson and secretary of the church governing board and was both pianist and choir member over the years. She was a member of the California Council of the Blind and the Council for Exceptional Children, a branch of a national organization of Special

Education teachers. After she moved to Piedmont Gardens she started a program for residents in need of low-vision information and aids. She was the floor representative, delivering daily schedules in the early morning hours to each resident on her floor. An avid handworker, she made towels, placemats, picture frames, and bookmarks by the dozens for both her church and Piedmont Gardens' holiday fairs. -----

WAM: Cane and Able

Bev Clifford

[Editor's Note: It's always a pleasure to read SVCB IN TOUCH, the newsletter of the Silicon Valley Council of the Blind,

edited by Susan Glass and crew. The August issue contained the following delightful article by Bev Clifford. BC readers will

remember her article “Touching Childbirth”, BC Fall, 2012, which not only won a CCB award as best lifestyle article of 2012, but received ACB’s Ned E. Freeman award for writing excellence at the ACB convention in 2013. And what does WAM stand for you ask? According to Bev, Mike Keithley thought up this whimsical column “The World According To Me” in which all manner of entities get their say.]

The World According to Me

Hello! You don't know me, so let me introduce myself: I'm Bev's Cane. And no, I'm not going to

be telling you a Bible story, in spite of what you may have gleaned from the title of this piece. You may be thinking to yourself, Hmmm: I haven't seen Bev's Cane around much lately-- maybe I've never seen it at all. And you'd be right: I spend most of my days relaxing, just hanging out in her hall closet among the coats and sweaters of all seasons, while Bev uses her Black Lab Chami as a guide. Not a very interesting way for me to live, you say? Well, that may be true, but from time to time I have another invaluable role to play that will just floor you, although it is not the job usually allotted to my species.

Take last Tuesday for instance. Bev's in her kitchen preparing brunch to eat out on her patio. It's a rather gusty but pleasant mid-summer day, late-morning, and Bev has just removed a banana from one of those flimsy plastic bags that fruit is often stored in. Placing the banana on a tray, she carelessly lays the bag on her kitchen counter, intending to toss it in the trash momentarily. But as she reaches up to get a bowl and a mug from her cupboard, the wind capriciously (and I believe with malice of forethought) picks up her bag and whisks it away, depositing it somewhere on the floor, most likely

either in the kitchen or the dining room, but perhaps even farther afield in the larger expanse of hallway and entryway.

"Aaaahhhh!" Bev shrieks in a most unladylike and inarticulate manner. (I know, she's usually more creative in her speech and more poised in her behavior, but I swear to you that what I say is absolutely true.) "RATS!" another screech, and then silence. I can just hear her thinking: How can I find that wayward bag before Chami grabs it?--that's what she's saying to herself. (I can imagine this, because I'm a very smart cane.) So I think to myself, How will she search for said bag? Normally when she loses

something, here's what she does--and I'm not making this up, I'm really not!

First, if the object makes a noise when it hits the floor, she literally dives toward it as fast as she can, following the sound to locate it before the noise stops. If she's lucky, she can get her hands on it before it skitters across the floor. (She does NOT want it to escape before she can capture it, thus the unceremonious dive.) But if the object falls to the floor soundlessly, she has to employ another tried-and-true strategy. She sits down on the floor (hopefully her floor is clean and she isn't wearing her Sunday best),

she spreads out both arms and both legs to encompass as wide an area of the floor as possible, and then--get this!--she begins scooting all over the floor, reaching--reaching still further--with all four limbs and with all her intense concentration. And in many cases, if she has picked the right area to scoot around in, one of those bodily appendages will encounter the lost item. What a sight she is to behold! But needs must, as they say; and if it works, then who am I to scoff?

This business is the worst-case scenario, however, because that plastic bag flitted away

with absolutely no noise at all, and her undignified scooting technique will most likely get her nowhere because the blasted thing could be anywhere in a rather large area. So Bev's little brain prods her to take another tack. Enter Yours Truly, her trusty-dusty Cane!: Now I come into my own, now I fulfill my destiny! Stepping smartly to the closet, Bev reverently removes me from my hook in the back corner, extracting me through the coats and sweaters toward the light of the outside world. Caressing me lovingly, she begins sliding me carefully and strategically in front of her as she wends her way from the entryway through

the hallway toward the dining room and into the kitchen. I, her seldom-used but all-important Cane, will now en-ABLE her to find the dratted plastic bag! We journey slowly around, while my amazing ball tip glides effortlessly (and oh-so-gracefully) to and fro across the floor, until at long last and after a painstaking search--swish!, crackle!--I find it! I am now touching the target! Gleefully Bev bends and retrieves the bag, and we march merrily toward the trash bin in triumph, where that little bag will finally meet its maker. Bev is happy because she won't have to worry about Chami getting sick from ingesting plastic, and her

husband Vic won't get annoyed by coming home to find tiny, moist pieces of plastic all over the house. And I, Bev's indispensable,

irreplaceable Cane, have once again saved the day by allowing her to be **ABLE** to find another lost thing. Three cheers for me! -----

Lynda Ruth Bardis: 10-8-1942—9-14-2014

Judy Wilkinson

This is one of the most difficult pieces I've had to write for the BC. To present my best friend of 57 years and to share with you why she has plaque #30 in the CCB's Hall of Fame: the personal and public.

On the personal side, she wore the same dress as my matron of honor that I had worn as her bridesmaid. (Given Lynda's taller, willowy,

elegant slender frame as contrasted with my, well, somewhat dumpier shorter form, you'll appreciate the miracle of seamstresses!) Nothing was going to keep her from my wedding: not losing the car's transmission on the way to the ceremony, not forgetting her suitcase and having to borrow my sister's shoes!

Here are the essentials

highlighted from her formal obituary which I helped her husband, Bob Ely, prepare for the Sacramento Bee.

“The daughter of Connie and Ray Bardis (both deceased), Lynda lost the last of her sight during her sophomore year in high school. She graduated from Tustin High School; received her BA in French from UC Santa Barbara, and her MA from Berkeley in Romance Languages.

“Her career took her to Sacramento where she was a lobbyist for the California Council of the Blind and the Association of Social Workers. Her work for the State of California included Chief

of the Division for the Blind in the Department of Social Services, and she ended her 35-year career as Deputy Director of the Specialized Services Division in the Department of Rehabilitation.

“She worked tirelessly to advance causes for people with disabilities: she was a founding organizer of Audio Vision, a radio reading service for the blind in Sacramento, and Sierra Regional Ski for Light. She served as president of the Disabled in California State Services 2003-2005.

“Awards from the disability community include induction to the Hall of Fame of the

California Council of the Blind in 2005 and The Ralph Black Public Service Award from the Association of California State Employees with Disabilities for 2013.

“Lynda’s civic activities went far beyond her work for the disability community. She was president of the Sacramento Chapter of ACLU in 1978; a founding member of the Sacramento Chapter of the National Organization of Women in 1979; appointed in 1980 to the California Commission for the Reorganization of Social Services for the State of California, and recently active in Healthcare for All.

“She is survived by her husband Robert Ely, her two step-children, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Lynda has legions of friends and armies of admirers who will miss her wit and wisdom, her charm and elegance and always her kindness.”

First there was the voice! Anyone who heard Lynda speak during her young womanhood nearly laughed out loud. How could you take anyone seriously with that little girl’s voice? But as we all came to discover, if you judged her solely on the basis of that voice, you’d be so, so wrong!

She joined the Council in the late 1960's and became its legislative advocate in 1968.

Often her advocacy work came from behind the scenes: a phone call, a nudge here and there so that the Council would take actions that she felt she couldn't be seen to support.

That was how she helped get the all-important SB 105 passed: the bill which instituted the Specialized Services Division: established to provide improved, specialized, and comprehensive services to individuals who are blind, visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing. Upon the recommendation

of then DOR Director Catherine Campisi (and with the support of the entire blindness community) she was the first deputy director of that Specialized Services Division, which has oversight and leadership of Blind Field Services, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Unit, Business Enterprises Program, Orientation Center for the Blind, and the Older Individuals who are Blind.

She retired from that position in 2005, the year in which she was inducted into the CCB Hall of Fame.

She was not active in the Council the final 10 years of her life. She and Bob moved to Tennessee to be nearer family, and there

she was diagnosed with the sarcoma cancer which she successfully battled for six years when the average is only one. The two returned to Sacramento in 2012, where they had a support community and a huge circle of friends.

Let me conclude with an excerpt which I presented at the celebration of Lynda's life held on October 5, 2014.

“Our friendship warms and renews us. You are with us until the last person who knows you joins your spirit. Then your name will still be spoken by those who read the plaques and awards. When those have all been

thrown away or destroyed, the universe will remember you as it does us all.

“Surely the poet Robert Frost was thinking of you when he wrote:

“The Rose Family

The rose is a rose,
And was always a rose.
But the theory now goes
that the apple's a rose,
And the pear is,
and so's the plum,
I suppose.

The dear only knows
what will next prove a
rose.

You [Lynda] of course are
a rose,
But were always a rose.”

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 aground. 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.

The last issue contained Goal 1; this issue contains the balance of the Strategic Plan with Goals 2, 3 and 4.]

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 #2

Review organizational structures and functions to implement efficiencies and enhance the provision of services.

Objective #1: Hire an Executive Director (Covered under Goal#1 Objective 3)			
Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Could be combo executive director/ development director. Actual details to be developed.	Work with Personnel Committee.	January 1-2017	
Objective #2: Hire a Grant Writer on a contract basis.			
Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Determine what aspects of CCB are	Task Force	Estimated \$10K/grant	July 1, 2015

most fundable with grants		with grant writer	
B. When hired, need great specificity in contract agreement – what deliverables and when	Task Force	January 1, 2016- no limitation on what category	Volunteer supervision
C. Capacity building grant may be most appropriate to begin with	Task Force makes the case for such a grant – e.g. the Strategic Plan, now one Convention-Conference, re-energized Board, policies in place, etc	October 1, 2016	Estimated \$10K/ grant with grant writer
Objective #3: Better efficiency in information collection & retrieval			
Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Membership database completed & up to date	ACB data base big help	December 1, 2014- ongoing-process	AA's salary

		largely completed	
B. Conference registration, processing of payments automated online	Administrative Assistant & volunteers	February 1, 2015	AA's salary & his role in supervising effort
C. Explore getting an iPhone app and using PayPal	Task Force	February 1, 2015	None

Objective #4: Total review of office technology

Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Explore the possibility of Cisco Systems donating a phone system for longer voice message boxes, ability to have Blind Californian read on one of the boxes.	Task Force and AA to specify what is needed in phone system and make an approach to Cisco Systems	October, 2014-com- plete initial inquiry	Minimal installation costs
B. Examine the state of office computers and upgrade/replace as needed	Task Force and AA	November 2014-on-going	Perhaps \$5K
C. Vet stacks of	Task Force	Ongoing January	Perhaps none

<p>old paper records and put relevant ones on computers. Need processes which don't generate paper</p>		<p>2018 completion</p>	<p>if techie volunteer is found – perhaps intern from local college or even high school</p>
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Objective #5: Board issues – Structures and Board Development

<p>Activities</p>	<p>Responsible Party</p>	<p>Time Frame</p>	<p>Costs</p>
<p>A. Complete & Implement Board Expectations document</p>	<p>Task Force & Board adoption of document to use in Board recruitment</p>	<p>Document completed October 2013</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>B. Examine present committee structures and recommend changes re: number and nature of committees & use of Task Forces</p>	<p>Task Force & Board adoption & necessary changes to Constitution & Bylaws needed</p>	<p>Completion convention 2016</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>C. Establish a method of informing the membership of</p>	<p>Task Force constructs approach and Board</p>	<p>Completion Convention 2016-may need</p>	<p>None</p>

skills the Board needs, construct a new Board Orientation & ongoing development	modifies and adopts. Ensures succession planning.	Constitution changes	
Objective # 6: The Blind Californian			
Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Coordinate with the active overall review of the Blind Californian	Task Force (committee gives recommendations to board by convention 2015)	Ongoing from present	None

GOAL #3

Increase membership and strengthen local Chapters and Affiliates.

Chair: Leena Dawes. Members: Linda Porelle, David Jackson & Eric Smiley. (The consultant recommends that the task force enlist the help of 2 or 3 members to assist with this Task Force. Recommendations of persons must be cleared first with the Board Chair.)

Objective #1: Orchestrating a mentoring program throughout CCB			
Activities	Responsible	Time Frame	Costs

	Party		
A. Create a mentoring Task Force	This Task Force	Begins August 1, 2014	None
B. Charge this Task Force with setting up a “buddy system” for new Board, Committee & Affiliates members. (At least one phone call per week.)	Mentoring Task Force	January, 2015	None
C. Extend mentoring to members new to CCB by asking those not much involved with CCB to be these mentors	This Task Force in conjunction with Mentoring Task Force	(December, 2014) Convention	None
D. Ensure that present and future leaders have a mentor	This Task Force	August 1, 2014- make sure this chore distributed among a number of people	None

Objective #2: Chapter Development

Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Strongly encourage chapters to have one regional event per year, rotating amongst counties.	A CCB Board Member should attend each if possible.	August 1, 2015	\$1000 for travel to regional meetings
B. Assisting Chapters in matters of transportation for Chapter and regional meetings	This Task Force, perhaps engaging local Lions Club members	Collect resources for chapters/ members to tap- February 1, 2015	None
C. Hold periodic CCB membership calls made by Board Members to exchange information both ways	This Task Force establishes the plan for the calls and enlists Board Members to make calls	Starting October 1, 2014- five office hours calls year- president/ officer and board member on call	None
D. Implement a master calendar for various events such as fundraisers, speakers, meetings, etc.	Administrative Assistant hosts the calendar, this Task Force designs and	December 1, 2014- ongoing	None

	implements the practice		
E. Investigate the efficacy of each Chapter & Affiliate having a listserv	Each should have two monitors This Task Force	October 1, 2014	None
F. Find ways for committees to work together more	This Task Force stimulating the Board to take leadership here	ongoing-bring suggestions to next convention board meeting	None
Objective #3: Recruitment			
Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Those on scholarship lists and recent winners are specifically invited to Convention	This task force prepares invitation and has board chair sign it	March 1, 2015- invitation to convention and other events-ongoing contact	Postage and time
B. To get more college students, we might go to classes and present various	Task Force can design a program to be presented,	December 1, 2014	\$500 for brochures

<p>topics. Develop or revise present brochure</p>	<p>make contact with colleges & recruit speakers (This task can be assigned to another committee)</p>		
<p>C. Over the year, speak to every TVI class in the state & DOR counselors</p>	<p>Task Force drafts message, makes contacts with colleges and recruits</p>	<p>December 1, 2015</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>D. Post resources and CCB literature in ophthalmology & geriatric offices</p>	<p>Task Force works through Chapter offices, identifies sites and asks Chapter personnel to distribute materials CCB provides</p>	<p>November, 2014-ongoing</p>	<p>Approximately \$500 for brochures & mailing</p>

E. Explore forming a special interest affiliate for blind parents	Task force explores as best they can the market for such an affiliate & proceeds from the results of that search	convention 2015	None
F. Launch an effort to reach sighted children of blind parents	Task force, like above, explores potential market and proceeds from the results of that search	convention, 2015- explore family track	None
G. Visit the veterans blind center in Palo Alto to recruit veterans & help them get veterans benefits	A member of the Task Force visits the center and discusses how CCB might help	February, 2015	None
H. Engage diabetes educators in the marketing of CCB	Task Force identifies the educators	June, 2015	None

	and makes initial contact		
I. Make crystal clear “What do I get by being a part of CCB?”	Whereas this is last, it has a due date very early. This is a critical piece of all of the above	September 1, 2014	None

GOAL #4

Discern the implications of going to one Conference/Convention and construct strategies to address them.

Chair: Robert Wendt. Members: Artis Bazyn, Gabe Griffith, & Roger Peterson. (The consultant recommends that the task force enlist the help of 2 or 3 Members to assist with this Task Force. Recommendations of persons must be cleared first with the Board Chair.)

Objective #1: Board Meeting schedule			
Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Have an in-person meeting in the fall	Task Force recommendation to the	Annually Have suggestions	None other than

	Board	for budget committee in August 1, 2014- have proposal for convention board meeting 2015	travel for some
A.1 Have President's meeting with Board Meeting	Task Force recommendation to the Board	Periodically	None other than travel for some
A.2 Hold a legislative seminar at the same time	Task Force recommendation to the Board	Periodically	None other than travel for some
A.3 Hold a membership seminar at the same time	Task Force recommendation to the Board	Periodically	None other than travel for some
A.4 Hold committee meetings or joint committee meetings at the same time	Task Force recommendation to the Board	Periodically	None other than travel for some

Objective #2: The Resolution Process

Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Resolutions must be in before the convention	Task Force recommendation to the Board	Annually	None
A.1 Move the deadline to one day earlier	Task Force recommendation to the Board	Annually	None
A.1 Move the deadline to one day earlier	Task Force recommendation to the Board	Annually	None
A.2 Committees must be thinking of resolution in a more timely manner	Task Force recommendation to the Board	Annually	None

Objective #3: Getting more delegates to convention

Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Offer a limited number of stipends to small chapters – particularly those at other end of the state	Task Force recommendation to the Board annually	August 2014- budget committee recommendation	Estimated \$3K/yr
A.1 Get greater	Task Force	October,	None

buy-in from moneyed chapters who do have funds but don't send delegates	design a plan to accomplish this annually	2014-ongoing	
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Objective #4: Board Meetings revisited

Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Have two in-person Board Meetings (April/May & October) and two open conference call meetings December/January & July/August	Task Force recommendation to the Board when also considering Objective A1	Annually August 2014 budget relevant	Travel costs greater than Objective A1
B. Ensure that Board Members document money spent for affiliate activities not reimbursed & submit to Admin. Assistant	Task Force proposes action to Board	October, 2014 for proposal Annually October 2014 ongoing	None

Objective #5: Fostering greater communication

Activities	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Costs
A. Have a voice	Task Force	Set up	Minimal

<p>mail box for public comments re: CCB with a person monitoring it</p>	<p>divides monitoring duties and recruits volunteers to assist</p>	<p>constructive input September 2014 ongoing</p>	
<p>B. Require Chapters & Affiliates to post an annual report of activities in the Fall Blind Californian & on website</p>	<p>Task Force orchestrates the initiative and gets buy-in from Chapters and Affiliates</p>	<p>Begins January, 2014 with results in fall 2015 Publications committee could present idea January 2015 ongoing</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>C. Establish an ethos of sharing ideas, successes and failures</p>	<p>Task Force champions this idea and moves it forward</p>	<p>Beginning January 2015</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Objective # 6: Additional ideas to consider</p>			
<p>Activities</p>	<p>Responsible Party</p>	<p>Time Frame</p>	<p>Costs</p>
<p>A. Increase Board Members and Committee Chairs travel to chapters</p>	<p>August, 2014- Budget Committee consideration</p>	<p>August, 2014</p>	

<p>A.1 Chapters might invite persons they want for their expertise</p>			
<p>A.2 Chapters might offer housing & meals to save costs</p>	<p>Task Force presents plan for this to the Board and informs Chapters of this initiative</p>		<p>Some travel assistance to Board Members Estimate at \$3K/annum</p>
<p>B. Strengthening special interest affiliates</p>	<p>See below</p>		<p>None</p>
<p>B.1 Encourage members to go to local chapters to speak about their affiliate</p>	<p>Task Force shares this idea with affiliate Chairs</p>	<p>October 2014</p>	
<p>B. 2 Affiliates hold teleconference meetings for members & interested people</p>	<p>Task Force shares this idea with affiliate Chairs</p>	<p>October 2014</p>	<p>None</p>

<p>C. Hold a free standing Capital Day when convention not in Sacramento</p>	<p>Task Force coordinates this Day with governmental affairs</p>	<p>Every other year February 1, 2015 ongoing-coordinates with Governmental Affairs committee</p>	<p>None</p>
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Consultant Notes

- **Task Force Chairs oversee their GOAL and initiate actions as indicated.**
- **Perhaps the first task re: the DRAFT is for each Task Force to review the time frames suggested and modify them as appropriate.**
- **Task Force Chairs report biweekly to Board Chair via email or phone progress on their GOAL.**
- **Task Force Chairs briefly report on their progress at each and every Board meeting.**
- **Additions to each Task Force must first be cleared by the Board Chair. These additions may include persons who are not CCB members but have needed skills.**
- **Constant monitoring of this process is critical. Keeping momentum going makes the job both easy and successful.**

I wish you God speed in this work.

Respectfully,

Don Wells, donwellsconsulting@yahoo.com

July 2013 -----

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.]

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(*13-15 2nd term)
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**Treasurer, Peter Pardini, Mill Valley (14-16 3rd term)
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**Immediate Past President, Donna Pomerantz, Pasadena
(14-??)
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