

**THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN**

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**CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF THE BLIND**

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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 1800 words.

The deadline to submit material for the spring, 2017 issue of THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN is noon, February 15, 2017.

Please send all address changes to the Executive Office.

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**From the Editor**

**by Mike Keithley**

It's raining while I'm writing, and I'm thinking of a Redwood tree in Cuesta Park in Mountain View that I often visit with Star on morning walks. It's not much more than a sapling ("I hope to have a bass voice soon!") so it hasn't been around much; but it's fun saying hello, putting my arms around the rather spongy bark and noting

the morning moisture. And in the summer time there's that wonderful resinous smell as the sun shines on the greenery. I believe there really is more oxygen under that tree at that time.

Anyway, welcome to the winter, 2017 BC. Much of the music in this issue is remembrance: Susan Glass tells us about

Teddie-Joy Remhild, Roger Petersen remembers Greg Fowler, and Cathie Skivers writes fond, appreciative memories of George Fogarty.

But we also have an amazing profile of CCB's Humboldt chapter, two

fundraising articles, interesting letters, Judy Wilkinson's ominous President's Message, and Jeff Thom's governmental Affairs report.

Enjoy!

\* \* \*

## **From The President's Desk: The Road Taken by Judy Wilkinson**

On this beautiful mid November autumn day sitting on my deck, I am reminded of the famous poem by Robert Frost about "The Road Not Taken".

No one will dispute that our organization is at a crossroads, and it should

come as no surprise that our very survival hangs in the balance. What road shall we take?

On the road we have traveled for the 82 years of our existence, there have been tremendous accomplishments and incalculable contributions

to the lives of Californians who are blind or have low vision. But of late, the terrain has changed, and our road is becoming more and more treacherous. However much we revere the organizational model which has brought us so far, real danger exists that without significant modernization, this road can lead us no further.

Put starkly, the volunteerism, self-financing and slow-moving governance processes on which we have relied leave us without the expertise or resources necessary to comply with the increasingly complex web of legal regulations within

which nonprofit organizations must operate. This model also leaves us unable to effectively compete for funds in today's highly-competitive and professionalized corporate and foundation funding environment.

We struggle every year just to keep our door open. Because we are forced to operate at a huge deficit, we will soon exhaust our dwindling reserves. Too many members finance CCB activities out of their own pockets. Support for growing membership: afraid not! Support for advocacy efforts: just ask Jeff Thom, our chief

unpaid legislative advocate, how little he has been reimbursed lately! Support for my legitimate expenses are minimal and paid from reserves which I hesitate to further deplete. Funds for new projects: I don't think so!

Now let's travel the other road on which CCB embarked when we hired our full-time chief executive officer (CEO) Paul Shane, and Jennifer Caldeira, our now full-time Administrative Services Officer (ASO)).

This road has already had unexpected bumps: the demise and crash of several office computers

necessitating an expenditure of \$5,000 for new computers, a server, yes even new chairs. Our Technical Operations Group as well as their computer consultant have been warning us for several years that this day would come. Our stalwart van (bought over 15 years ago when the organization had more money) has died, leading us to develop a procedure for operating without it, which the new CEO and the Board have done. Things we previously did by the seat of our pants as it were, Paul is creating policies for: such as developing guidelines under which CCB can accept donations;



such as a pay and reimbursement policy to cover employees or members when they travel on CCB business; such as a streamlined budget process. Paul is currently hard at work on a "Case Statement," a document about the organization, its history, its activities, its future plans. Such a document is necessary to seek funding opportunities for the organization. Depending where we are in the process when you read this, members and chapters will be seeing various surveys and questions to assist in gathering information for this critical document. We have launched our first

fundraising activity for 2017: a comedy night at Tommy t's in Sacramento on January 21. None of these things would have been handled as effectively or quickly without professional full-time attention and expertise.

The wise poet knew we would sometimes pine for the other road, the one not taken. And there is no guarantee that either road will lead us where we want to go, but we must take bold action. In choosing this road, I assure you that the values we have held dear for 82 years will continue to guide and define CCB.

Let me conclude by wishing you a joyous holiday season. As we begin the new year, I ask

you to join me as we travel this challenging new road together.

\* \* \*

## **CCB Governmental Affairs Report**

**by Jeff Thom**

Let's start with the federal scene, and then turn to California. If anyone has a crystal ball to give us an idea as to what a Trump Administration and a Republican Congress will mean for persons with vision impairments, I'd sure like him/her to let me know. It can be argued that, as a small minority that has issues that both parties can identify with, we may be better positioned to make some positive changes. It may

just as persuasively be argued that a Trump Administration and a Republican Congress will not be as committed, or even examine any disability issues that create either additional government spending or place burdens upon business.

Whatever way the future shakes out, it will certainly be an interesting year for us to advocate on Capitol Hill. During its 2017 ACB

**Legislative Seminar, ACB will certainly be working for the re-introduction and passage of its two major legislative initiatives, the Cogswell-Macy Act, to strengthen special education requirements for persons who are blind, deaf, and deaf-blind; and the Medicare Demonstration of Coverage for Low Vision Devices Act, to establish a pilot project for the coverage under Medicare of prescribed low-vision aids. If you've participate in the ACB Legislative Seminar before, you know what an important advocacy opportunity it is for attendees, and if you haven't, you are really**

**missing something. This year's seminar will take place on February 27, and we'll be on Capitol Hill visiting our Congressional delegation on February 28. If you are hoping to come to this event, or can help with funding for others to do so, please contact me at 916-995-3967 or via e-mail at [jeff.thom@ccbnet.org](mailto:jeff.thom@ccbnet.org).**

**The 2016-17 state legislative session was a mixed bag for CCB. Thanks to the outstanding work of so many CCB members and non-members alike, especially that of Margie Donovan, and the excellent work of the author Senator Fran Pavley and her staff, Senate Bill 1331 was**

passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. This bill increases from 2 to 3 members the number of guide dog handlers required to be on the Guide Dog Board; requires the board to produce and place on its website a fact sheet that California schools will provide to their graduates; and allows, subject to specified conditions, a staff member from an out-of-state guide dog school certified by the International Guide Dog Federation to provide follow-up care to Californians who have received their dogs from that school. Next year hearings will be held on

whether to continue the existence of the Guide Dog Board, which would be eliminated on January 1, 2017 unless extended by the Legislature. CCB will need to determine its position on this matter.

Our other bill, AB1824, was vetoed by the Governor. This bill would have strengthened criminal provisions relating to dog attacks against service animals by adding lost wages and medical costs of the person with a disability to the costs for which restitution from the owner of the attacking dog could be sought, and for which a claim could be made for compensation

from the State Victim Compensation Board. In addition, it would have applied these provisions to attacks even when the service animal was not specifically engaged in its duties. The Governor appeared, however, to veto the bill only because of a specific provision that was not central to what we were trying to accomplish, and it is our hope that we can have the Legislature pass the bill again in 2017 and this time obtain the Governor's signature.

In what might be called a small victory followed by a defeat, the Legislature and the Governor agreed through the state budget

process, to provide for the first increase in the state's share of SSI benefits in almost a decade. Benefit levels have fallen below the poverty level, and this increase will hopefully begin to redress this unconscionable situation. On the other hand, the Governor vetoed AB1584, which would have restored the automatic cost-of-living adjustment provision for the state's portion of SSI benefits, a provision that was repealed in 2009. The Legislature also passed AJR35, which requests the federal government to allow California to end the practice it requested almost half a century ago of giving cash to SSI

recipients instead of food stamps. At that time the cash grant given in lieu of food stamps was more valuable, but now the reverse is true. The complication, however, is that certain families with children would actually lose if this request were granted, so the federal government would need to do something to ensure this wouldn't happen. Stay tuned on this issue! CCB, as the only active blindness organization in a large statewide coalition working on SSI reform, will continue to work hard on all SSI-related issues in 2017 and beyond.

Finally, I would like to make you aware of some of the activities in which I am involved on behalf of CCB. First, I was appointed to a taskforce to redesign disability training information to be provided to county social workers involved in the In-Home Supportive Services Program. I am also entering into discussions with leaders in the field of the education of persons who are blind or low vision to discuss whether there might be initiatives we can take in this area. Finally, I am involved in a very complex administrative process that arose out of a bill we supported a couple of years ago concerning

the potential for sensors, including an audible tone, to let consumers know when their clothes dryers have a lint build-up that presents a danger of fire. It is far too soon to know what will become of this process, but the fact that we are at the table is indicative of our increasing footprint in California's governmental affairs.

Of course, many other CCB members are also engaged in state agency advocacy, including Mitch Pomerantz who leads our contingent on the Department of Rehabilitation Blind Advisory Committee, Gene Lozano who leads the way with our efforts with the

Department of Transportation and the State Building Standards Commission, and Ardis Bazyn who advocates with the Secretary of State's office on voting issues. I want to thank everyone who works on advocating at the state or local levels for all of your efforts. Even more importantly, get ready to roll up your sleeves, and when called upon, let our public officials know where we stand. Also, when you have issues that you think need to be addressed, let me or other CCB leaders know of your concerns. Working together we can make a difference!

\* \* \*

## **The Importance in Telephoning Your Representatives When Lobbying on an Issue by Daniel Victor**

**{Daniel Victor is a senior staff editor at The New York Times.}**

**Kara Waite, an English teacher at Bunker Hill Community College in Charlestown, Mass., made a rule for herself: For every political rant she posts on Facebook, she must pick up the phone and call a legislator.**

**"It's kind of a swear jar for political action," Ms. Waite said recently.**

**Ms. Waite, who volunteers for liberal causes and who created a widely shared document last week to teach others her methods, figures that a phone ringing off the hook is more difficult for a lawmaker to ignore than a flooded inbox.**

**Activists of all political stripes recommend calling legislators, not just emailing, and certainly not just venting on social media. Several lawmakers, along with those who work**



for them, said in interviews that Ms. Waite is right: A phone call from a constituent can, indeed, hold more weight than an email, and far outweighs a Facebook post or a tweet.

To understand why, it helps to know what happens when someone answers the phone at a legislator's office. Even if you don't speak directly to the lawmaker, staff members often pass the message along in one form or another.

Emily Ellsworth, whose jobs have included answering phones in the district offices of two

Republican representatives from Utah, Jason Chaffetz, from 2009 to 2012; and Chris Stewart from 2013 to 2014, said the way your points reach a lawmaker depends on how many calls the office is getting at the time and how you present your story.

In some cases, it's a simple process. When a caller offered an opinion, staff members would write the comments down in a spreadsheet, compile them each month and present reports to top officials, she said. If the lawmaker had already put out a statement on the issue, the staff

member would read it to the caller, she said.

But a large volume of calls on an issue could bring an office to a halt, sometimes spurring the legislator to put out a statement on his or her position, Ms. Ellsworth said. She recommended the tactic in a series of tweets shared thousands of times.

"It brings a legislative issue right to the top of the mind of a member," she said. "It makes it impossible to ignore for the whole staff. You don't get a whole lot else done." When her branch in Utah received a lot of calls, she

contacted the Washington office and coordinated the messaging, involving the communications director, the legislative director or the chief of staff, Ms. Ellsworth said.

While scripts found on the Internet can be useful for people uncomfortable talking on the phone, she suggested making the phone calls as personal as possible. In some cases, if she was moved by a call, she would pass on the comments to her district director, she said.

"What representatives and staffers want to hear is the individual impact of your

individual story," she said. "I couldn't listen to people's stories for six to eight hours a day and not be profoundly impacted by them."

Representatives in Congress may not be able to respond to individual phone calls, but your odds may be higher if you contact officials at the local or state levels.

A New York State Senator, Phil Boyle, a Republican, said that one of his staff members would contact him after a constituent called his office, and that he would try to call everyone back. That's a

perk exclusive to those who call in, since he sometimes gets more than 300 emails per day, he said.

"I couldn't possibly do that for emails," Mr. Boyle said.

When it's a subject in which he lacks expertise, he said, the calls have made a difference. In one case, several retired law enforcement officers called him about a gun control law that was enacted in 2013, worried that they would have to give up their service revolvers.

Senator Boyle, who said he doesn't use firearms much, was unaware of that

possibility and proposed an amendment to grant them an exception. Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo granted the exception seven months after the law was passed.

Most calls can be handled by staff members, said Brian Kolb, the Republican minority leader in the New York State Senate. Many callers just want to express an opinion and don't even offer a name, he said.

In other cases, callers who want to talk out an issue more fully could be directed to a staff member who has expertise in the area, said State Senator Liz

Krueger, a Democrat in New York.

Ms. Waite, who has had a calendar reminder for each Monday morning alerting her to "call party leadership," said that first-time callers often fear they will be quizzed or interrogated, but that they generally just need to offer their opinion and basic personal information, like name and city. She implored people to be courteous, since the staff members might be getting many calls. "Communicate in a way that someone can't ignore," Ms. Waite said.

\* \* \*

## **Fresno Chapter Fundraiser**

**by Sylvia Lopez**

Greetings, fellow CCB members. I want to share a little about the Fresno Chapter's annual fundraiser held on October 15th of this year.

We held our event at a beautiful park here in Fresno. Everyone who attended had an awesome time. We had several events, like costume contest for both pets and owners. A few of our members dressed like their guide dogs. Some were referees, Batman & Batdog and some of our people dressed up their canes as well. In spite of the

weather, we all enjoyed ourselves with exciting raffles, door prizes and the food was excellent!

There were prizes like movie passes and gift cards to restaurants and retail stores. We sold tickets in advance and with every purchase we received bracelets so that the caterers would know who to serve. Wearing these bracelets served more than just having the caterers recognize us, it also gave us the opportunity to reach out to those who may have been around us at the park who

might have been wondering why so many white canes and guide dogs were there. It gave us the chance to speak of our chapter and of the CCB.

As far as what we had catered, there were Tri-tip, BBQ Chicken, Salad, Rice, rolls, beverages and delicious desserts. There were fabulous door prizes that were donated by members and businesses in Fresno. We also had a raffle in which all members purchased and sold to anyone who were interested in winning awesome prizes like a Google book, beauty products from Avon and other prizes that were donated by individuals

who support us as a chapter.

We sold tickets for our fundraiser at \$25 per adults and \$15 per child under 12. Everyone worked really hard and we all worked together as a team to make it both a fun and successful event. We made a profit of about \$3,000.

It was more than just a fundraiser, it was also the day we celebrated National White Cane Safety Day. The President's declaration was read to everyone stating that October 15th was Blind Americans Equality Day. We then stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer to honor the day.

To close, we had fun and a very successful day. We are planning to put

pictures on our Facebook page soon. Thank you.

\* \* \*

## **Many Stones Can Form an Arch: A Profile of the Humboldt Council of the Blind**

**by Susan Glass**

The next time you find yourself visiting or passing through the town of Eureka California, you might want to take a stroll along the marina boardwalk. On the dock nearest the water, you'll find a garden that will invite you to walk slowly, touch gently, and breathe deeply. It's the Sensory Garden planted and cared for by the Humboldt Council of the Blind. Rooted in the

ground and also in pots, you'll find such herbs as rosemary, oregano, lavender, thyme, chocolate mint, and peppermint. You can touch the delicate Lambs Ear and Fairy Wand plants, and also the Sweet Peas, whose drying pods, once the fragrant blooms are spent, whisper in the breeze. Let your fingers read the sturdiness of Shasta Daisies, and the mystery of the garden's

newest resident, the Lilly of the Nile. Each plant has a braille label near it that identifies it, and a sign posted at the garden's entrance displays a copy of the braille alphabet.

Blind and visually impaired people are not the only residents of Humboldt County to benefit from the garden. It is constantly visited by classes of sighted pre-school children, walkers and hikers of all ages, and members of the local garden club. Everyone who visits the marina can enjoy this contribution to community life made by the Humboldt Council.

According to Doug Rose, who has been a council member for 20 years, the Humboldt chapter of CCB has always been "organic," in that it has always addressed the needs of blind and visually impaired people as those needs have arisen, and also found a way to address those needs so as to benefit the greater community beyond the Council. He cites the procurement of an Audible Traffic Signal in the town of McKinleyville, and the installation of audio description at a local movie theater, as projects that benefited the general public and raised community awareness of



issues faced by blind and visually impaired citizens.

Currently the Humboldt Council has 12 members, most of whom are blind and visually impaired with the exception of the treasurer, who is fully sighted. The majority are seniors; some younger members have just acquired full time jobs. The chapter meets in the office of the local water district during all but the summer months, when members go on vacation. As the November elections approach, they are working to put measures on the ballot that will regulate rent control in local mobile home parks. Because they

are a small chapter, they can use an email list as their newsletter. All members seem to be active and productive. Bernice Kistler, who created the Sensory Garden, also works at the local American Cancer Society. Member Ryan Estevo attended college in Southern California, worked for 11 years at Capital Records, and is now back in Humboldt earning his Masters Degree in Social Work. Juliannah Harris earned her CSUN Assistive Technology Degree, and is now employed by Tri-County Independent Living (TCIL). And member Gavin Smiley works as a stand-up comic,

home brews beer, and campaigns for accessible bus-stops throughout the community. He says that he would like to address drivers who attend traffic school, and high school students, on things they need to know in order to drive safely around blind people.

"I especially want to reach out to people who are losing their sight, and who feel isolated by that experience," said Doug Rose, who has been blind since age 5 due to retinal blastoma, or cancer of the retina. Doug attended the Nebraska School for the Blind, and then the University of Nebraska at

Lincoln. He moved to Los Angeles in the 1980s, where he attended Long Beach State. After graduating, he worked first at the Braille Institute teaching adaptive technology, and then worked at Packard Bell Computers providing customer support to cell phone users. Now retired, he volunteers his mornings providing technical support for the Reading Service of the Redwoods. Working through the local Senior Center Without Walls, Doug also runs a telephone support group for seniors who have lost their vision, and now feel isolated from family and community. But his great

passion these days is water gardening, and BC readers may recall his article about this hobby that appeared in a recent Braille Forum.

There's a tenacity to Humboldt chapter members that's delightfully infectious.

"I don't give up easily," said 69 year old Bernice Kistler, who has glaucoma and a narrow field of vision. "I started visiting the Senior Center at the Light House when I was 64. I learned to ride the bus by myself, and to cook without cutting my fingers. I also learned to lobby the city council, our town

mayor, and the local parks to get our garden started. One guy had the nerve to tell me we couldn't put our garden on the dock because he didn't think it was safe for a bunch of blind people to walk out there. I said he could go right on saying that, and that his comment revealed more about his ignorance than about blind people."

"I think that our chapter brings together people who want to create positive change for all stakeholders in the community," says Ryan Estevo, "and Doug Rose especially, is responsible for nurturing projects that advocate for people with all kinds of

disabilities." In addition to his full-time studies at Cal State Humboldt, Ryan is interning at the Department of Rehabilitation, where, in concert with the employment coordinator, he helps clients cultivate such crucial skills as résumé writing, interviewing for work, and researching job possibilities. At 38 years of age, Ryan is no stranger to enormous life changes. He lost the majority of his vision at the height of his career as a business analyst for Capital Records. He moved back to Humboldt, to his roots of family and friends, and started the process of rebuilding his life. He spent

time at the Orientation Center in Albany learning mobility, technology and life skills that he now passes along to his clients. He displays an articulate compassion for others, and a ready smile that one hears even in a telephone interview. When Ryan speaks of "breaking the cycle of ambivalence," the phrase is no abstraction. He volunteers at a local food bank, and is aware of his community's diverse needs.

"We have a significant indigenous population," he says, "and costs of living, that, as in other parts of California, can be difficult to manage. And we're a

rural community, working for better public transportation, for bus service that extends to evening hours and on weekends."

Good public transportation is often a key component of independence for those of us who are blind and visually impaired. It enables us to attend city council meetings that often occur in the evenings. It allows us to enjoy local theater and other forms of entertainment. And for the Humboldt Council of the blind, it even plays a role in a current priority of increasing members' connection with nature. Creation of a new

community forest in Eureka is in the works, with 20 miles of trail running along the bay. There are also 1000 acres of public land behind the fair grounds. A priority for the Humboldt Council is to make these public spaces accessible to blind and visually impaired people. Good public transportation, says Ryan, must be a part of that accessibility. The council wants to make sure that bus routes have stops near the trail heads. "You have to be able to get to a place before you can start appreciating it," he says. Once one arrives in the open space preserves, trail signage needs to be

accessible, and trails need ropes or wooden bumpers that can guide walkers.

The Humboldt Council of the Blind is a small, resourceful, multi-talented group of people who participate fully in their larger community, and

enhance that community's quality of life in myriad ways. Together they embody the credo that many hands accomplish great work, or, to borrow from a Polish folk tune, "Many stones can form an arch."

\* \* \*

## **Remembering Greg Fowler**

**by Roger Petersen**

{From the November, 2016 SVCB In Touch newsletter.}

When Bernice and I came to California in November, 1986, the only local person we knew was Chris Gray, and I went to work with him at Telesensory Corp.,

formerly Telesensory Systems Inc. Chris introduced us to the local blind community immediately and one of the first people we met was Greg Fowler, along with his partner, later his wife, Julie Lovins. They both embodied the happy

combination of great intelligence combined with public spiritedness and advocacy. Greg was always quiet, so sometimes we blind folk had some doubt whether he was there or not. But he was known by his deeds, particularly those related to computers, his specialty.

In early 1987, a group of us got together to organize the Silicon Valley Council of the Blind as a chapter of the California Council of the Blind. In the early years, Greg was always in the leadership group, serving some time as president. Later, he backed off from the chapter

somewhat, but he was always there when we needed him for something.

One of his interests has always been transportation and he and Bernice used to attend VTA and MTC meetings (Valley Transportation Authority and Metropolitan Transportation Commission). Bernice tells the story that one time she could not go to the VTA meeting at the County Building, so she called Greg that evening to find out what happened at the meeting. She discovered that on the way to the VTA meeting, Greg and Julie stopped by the county

Clerk's office and got married.

Greg was similarly helpful to other community organizations such as the local League of Women Voters, and he served on the board of the National Braille Press. For several years, he has been serving on the Technical Operations Group in the California Council of the Blind, the group that takes care of all the CCB's electronic functions, web, email lists, streaming, etc.

And he has been a personal friend to me, providing advice,

equipment loan and other assistance. He and Julie took me to the hospital for an emergency appendectomy in 1987 and, when I returned home, they presented me a t-shirt with a philosophical principle printed on it that I have always tried to live up to; "Life is uncertain, so eat dessert first."

All of this good work stopped abruptly on September 25, 2016, when his heart stopped without warning. He was only 64 years old! We will miss you very much, Greg!

\* \* \*



## **For Those We Have Lost: Of Grief, Gratitude, and Going Forward**

**by Bonnie Rennie**

The year 2016 has seen the passing of many true CCB treasures, several are household names to most of us. I believe that something should be said in recognition of them, and also of those early leaders who have gone before.

As a history buff, I think that the achievements of the past directly relate to our present and future. So in the poem below, I attempt to weave two concepts together; encouragement to mourn and remember those we have recently lost, and a sense of how much we

owe the visually impaired pioneers who blazed the trail for us. Often, younger or newly vision-impaired people do not know of the past struggles that enabled our current rights and opportunities. It is my hope that more folks with vision loss will want to help secure these rights and opportunities and will follow the example of the leaders we here acknowledge.

**For Those We Have Lost**

We are standing on the shoulders of our brothers and sisters in CCB,

Those who went before,  
Caring advocates for their  
fellow blind,  
Champions of the Cause,  
True comrades in arms.  
Toiling for equal  
opportunity,  
Bringing down barriers we  
face,  
They did more,  
With positive action,  
Were not content to  
complain,  
Not merely sound the  
alarms!

So much of what we with  
vision impairment have  
today,  
Gains in rehab, education,  
employment,  
How we're seen and  
treated in the communities  
where we live,  
Came by their efforts,

Too often going it alone,  
In the classrooms,  
Jobs,  
Halls of Legislation,  
In services for the blind,  
Carrying their dignity, and  
white cane in hand,  
They knew society would  
benefit,  
Because we with vision  
loss have a great deal to  
give!

As we mourn the departure  
of a fresh batch of  
pioneers,  
We can hear our role  
models' voices  
Calling for our  
contributions,  
As the world changes,  
New battles call us  
together,  
To fight the good fight.  
Our mentors urge,

Keep going forward!  
Not to squander their  
sacrifice,  
Show the sighted the way,

With our leadership  
And our own brand of  
light!

\* \* \*

## **Teddie-Joy Remhild: Writer and Activist**

**by Susan Glass**

{Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the Summer 2015 issue of the BC. We reprint it here (with some revisions) in order to celebrate the life of Teddie-Joy Remhild, who passed away on August 11, 2016.}

Teddie-Joy was a prolific prose writer, blogger, memoirist and poet. A Google search inputting her name brings up her ACB Forum article "How Labels Limit Us," her

Disability and Aging Advocacy blog, and a Classroom of the Air Access World podcast interview called The Dream of Your Lifetime: Taking a Cruise, in which Teddie-Joy shares her cruise experiences. Her nonfiction has appeared in the magazine The Writing Disorder. Most of us in CCB were familiar with her advocacy, but she was a bold writer as well.

To speak with Teddie-Joy is to know a voice that sparkles with creativity and spunk. She was born in Los Angeles in 1933, and according to her memoir she was writing, her beginnings were anything but auspicious.

"First I had to survive my childhood." This is the opening sentence of Teddie-Joy's book. She and her baby sister were left alone by their mother in an apartment for 3 days before Teddie-Joy was 3 years old. By the time she was 4, she'd gotten rickets from malnutrition. At one point she was nearly killed in a car accident. Finally she was rescued by her

grandmother and life started improving. She's spent much of her life in Southern California, including two years in San Diego and two years in Fresno. She'd always had a visual impairment, but at the age of 35, Teddie-Joy completely lost her central vision.

Encouraged by a rehab counselor who was also a friend, Teddie-Joy attended an NFB convention in Chicago.

"I walked in, and there were all these blind people, everywhere! Canes! Braille! I burst into tears. I thought, this isn't me; this

can't be my life now; I don't belong here."

Her friend comforted her, and she stayed for the duration of the convention, and even joined NFB, but quit after two years "due to its controlling, only one way to be blind philosophy."

At around this same time in her life, Teddie-Joy met Mitch Pomerantz who told her about CCB. She joined the organization in 1991, and has never left.

Her life's accomplishments were many: At age 54, she earned a degree in Gerontology from USC. In addition to working full-

time, she served on the CCB board, started the ACB Alliance on Aging, and co-founded the ACB Multicultural Concerns Affiliate. She regularly attended ACB conventions, and for a number of years, hosted the Friends in Art Annual Prose and Poetry Reading. She was legislative chair for the Glendale Burbank chapter as well as its Vice President, and she also worked with Jeff Thom on the Governmental Affairs Committee. Just recently, she was appointed as a board member to the Public Authority for In-Home Supportive Services for Los Angeles County. Years earlier, she worked

for this same organization as a paid employee. An acronym for the organization is PASC, standing for Personal Assistance Services Council.

"I don't know what people mean when they say they've retired," quipped Teddie-Joy. "I can't imagine not working."

She talked more about her memoir during a interview.

"Because of my life span, 1933 to now, it's about a lot more than me. In the sixties when women's lib evolved and Betty Friedan wrote her Feminist

Mystique, I said she's talking to me."

Teddie-Joy participated in a writing workshop that meets regularly in Pasadena. It's taught by a woman from Serbia who has published 39 books.

"If I wanted to, I could enroll in writing workshops taught at the Braille Institute. But for some people there, well, the Braille Institute is their whole life. I sometimes feel that I don't fit into any one niche. I have some peripheral vision now, albeit marginal. I'm not sighted; I'm not blind. I shouldn't have to be either of these things; I'm me; I'm

both. That in and of itself is an experience worth articulating, worth writing about."

Since all good writers read, I asked Teddie-Joy what books and topics intrigued her.

"I'm a big fan of American history and American biographies. Just now I'm in the middle of reading the Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys by Doris Kearns Goodwin. I like her writing. She lets you get to know her biographical subjects as human beings. Her writing is never dry. I like mysteries also. Just now I'm reading the latest John Grisham book which is

about coal miners, and is set in Appalachia."

I asked Teddie-Joy what advice she'd give to other writers.

"Write what matters to you in life. Be personal. Don't gloss over life's realities."

And what advice did she offer young women, both blind and sighted?

"Get in touch with your real self and be who you are. Don't be who you think other people want you to be."

CCB and ACB meant a lot to Teddie-Joy.

"I came to these communities after enduring many losses. I like the work I can do here. I like my friends here. And when I go to conventions, I attend as many mixers as I can. I want to get to know people."

Teddie-Joy is planning to be in Dallas this year [2016], and I, for one, am looking forward to hanging out with her.

**Post Script:** I did meet Teddie-Joy in Dallas. We ate dinner together, and then sauntered arm in arm around the hotel lobby, discussing everything from the books we were reading, to the best writing

workshops we'd ever attended, to the future of CCB. Teddie-Joy also met and immediately befriended my good chum Sue Mangis who lives in Sacramento. It was so like her to make friends instantly. Light on her feet and frank in conversation, she brought texture and determination to our friendship. I miss her, and will miss her for a long time to come.

In an additional tribute to Teddie-Joy, Bonnie Rennie writes:

Teddie-Joy and I once served together on the Seniors with Vision Loss Committee. During one of



our chats, we discovered something wonderful that we had in common, which still brings a smile: our love for the charming seaside resort town of Carlsbad, California. We'd place ourselves in the "feel good" zone by describing the relaxing places there to stay and eat, especially the multi-sensory splendor of the ocean and the many

ways to enjoy it. She lamented that Carlsbad was fairly inaccessible to people with disabilities as there was no direct train service to the city. Well, Teddie-Joy, it's not direct service, but train service there is! I wish we could take that train together and bring our friends!

\* \* \*

## **The Fabulous Fogartys**

**by Cathie Skivers**

On October the 6th, 2016 CCB had its 82nd birthday! On that date in 1934, the formation meeting of our organization was held in Fresno. CCB has gone through some good times

and bad times. A lot of changes have taken place, and thanks to the determination and dedication of many of our members, we have been

leaders in California and throughout the country.

Many of you new and remember George Fogarty- he is in our hall of fame. He died after a long illness on October 25, 2003.

He is someone that holds a special spot in the hearts of me and my family. He was the rehab counselor who helped me get into my job at the IRS. Without it I couldn't have been able to keep my sons with me when we lost Jack in 1976.

George had many duties in CCB. Before 1959 when he withdrew from CCB and became part of the group who started the Associated Blind of California where

50% of CCB members moved to the Federation, he served as White Cane Week chairman. This major fundraiser, centered around White Cane Safety Day, featured the mailing of 100,000 letters to Californians. When I became WCW chair, we mailed out 200,000 letters, and our history doesn't fail to note that Martha Lovina Fogarty addressed every one of those letters for probably ten years. They were all typed and took countless hours.

In the many documents we collected is a resolution which give those of you who didn't know him a look at what those who knew him well. I include it below.

**Resolution 2002-14 George Fogarty**

**Whereas, George I. Fogarty is both a charter and lifetime member of the American Council of the Blind; and**

**Whereas, George Fogarty has dedicated his life to advocating on behalf of blind and visually impaired people; and**

**Whereas, George Fogarty is a native of California, born on June 12, 1911; and**

**Whereas, although George Fogarty has usable vision, he has been a lifelong supporter and user of braille; and**

**Whereas, George had an outstanding and lengthy career as a counselor-teacher and job placement officer for the California Department of Education and rehabilitation; and**

**Whereas, during these years of service, he started a vending program at the California School for the Blind to encourage students to use their skills in mathematics and braille, to increase their socialization skills by working with the public, and to raise their self-esteem; and**

**Whereas, this class was especially popular because the students shared the**

profits at the end of each school year; and

Whereas, he assisted hundreds of people to acquire employment, pioneering the placement of blind and visually impaired individuals as hospital dark-room X-ray developers, medical transcribers, shipyard workers, and Internal Revenue Service employees; and

Whereas, George served as president and treasurer of his state affiliate, and in various capacities within the American Council of the Blind; and

Whereas, he and Lovinia, his late wife of 49 years,

worked tirelessly raising funds during White Cane Week, which were shared equally between the California Council of the Blind and the American Council of the Blind; and

Whereas, he is, and always has been, most generous in sharing not only his time talents and money, but in freely dispensing Jack Daniels and other good libations, as any good Irishman should; and

Whereas, his warm personality and beautiful renditions of Irish and other music have endeared him to clients and friends alike; and

whereas, he greatly desired to attend the convention in Houston, but his hearing loss that impedes his participation in convention activities and his interaction with friends prevented him doing so,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, by the American Council of the Blind, in convention assembled this 4th day of July, 2002, at the

Adam's Mark Hotel, in Houston, Texas that this organization congratulate George L. Fogarty on his dedication and years of service on behalf of persons who are blind or visually impaired and on behalf of the American Council of the Blind, and let him know that he is loved, respected, and missed at this 2002 convention.

\* \* \*

**\$1000 Grant Available Through the Barbara Rhodes Adaptive Technology Fund**

**by Alice Turner**

{Editor's note: This article was published in the fall, 2016 Shared Visions, newsletter of the Vista

Center for the Blind and visually impaired.}

The Silicon Valley Council of the Blind, a chapter of

**the California Council of the Blind, is now accepting applications for the Barbara Rhodes Adaptive Technology Grant.**

**Launched in 2010, this program annually awards a grant of up to \$1000 to a blind or visually impaired person, age 16 or older, living in Santa Clara, San Mateo, Santa Cruz or San Benito Counties, who can best demonstrate the need for adaptive technology that will improve his/her quality of life or advance his/her educational and/or employment opportunities.**

**Examples of items that the grant might fund include, but are not limited to: hearing aids and audiologist fees, mobility**

**aids (like white canes) and payment for mobility instructors, adapted mobile devices, adapted computers, repair of adapted computers, magnifying systems, medical aids, and bar code readers.**

**For more info about the Barbara Rhodes Technology Grant, call 888-652-5333 or email [svcb@onebox.com](mailto:svcb@onebox.com). You may download an application form by visiting the web site [www.svcb.cc](http://www.svcb.cc). All applications must be postmarked by Tuesday, January 31, 2017 to be considered by the Tech Grant committee.**

**\* \* \***

## **Scholarships**

**Apply for a 2017  
Scholarship with ACB!**

**The American Council of the Blind (ACB) annually awards approximately 20 scholarships of up to \$3,500 to vocational/technical school students, entering freshmen, undergraduate and graduate college students who are legally blind, maintain a 3.3 GPA and are involved in their school/local community.**

**Applications may be submitted beginning November 1, 2016 and all materials must be received**

**by 11:59 PM. Eastern on February 15, 2017.**

**To read the scholarship guidelines and complete an online application, please visit [www.acb.org/scholarship-application](http://www.acb.org/scholarship-application).**

**If you are interested in applying, or know someone who is, please contact Dee Theien by phone at 612-332-3242 or by email at [dtheien@acb.org](mailto:dtheien@acb.org) for more information.**

**We look forward to receiving your application materials!**

## **CCLVI Scholarship Announcement**

**The Council of Citizens  
with Low Vision  
International (CCLVI) will  
award three scholarships  
in the amount of \$3,000  
each to one full-time  
entering freshman,  
undergraduate and  
graduate college students  
who have low vision,  
maintain a strong GPA and  
are involved in their  
school/local community.**

**Application materials must  
be received by March 1,  
2017. Scholarship monies  
will be awarded for the  
2017 - 2018 academic year.**

**To read the scholarship  
guidelines and complete  
an online application,  
please visit [www.cclvi.org](http://www.cclvi.org)  
and click on the 'CCLVI  
Scholarship Programs'  
link.**

**Applications will be  
available to submit online  
from January 1 until March  
1 at 11:59 pm Eastern  
Standard Time. Questions  
may be directed to CCLVI  
at 800-733-2258 or  
[scholarship@cclvi.org](mailto:scholarship@cclvi.org).**

**We look forward to  
receiving your application  
materials!**

**\* \* \***



## **Historic Accessible Book Treaty Takes Effect edited from the ACB Leadership List**

{The original article is at [www.perkins.org/stories/news/historic-accessible-book-treaty-takes-effect-today](http://www.perkins.org/stories/news/historic-accessible-book-treaty-takes-effect-today).}

In 22 countries and counting, the Marrakesh Treaty will make more accessible books available for people who are blind.  
Stalin Arul Regan

Devadoss knows how hard it can be for people with visual impairments to get books in braille format.

In August, Devadoss received an urgent request in his native India from a

college student who is blind. The student had enrolled in an English Literature class, but only standard print copies of the textbook were available. She needed a braille version--and fast.

"She was falling behind in her class," said Devadoss, who works for a government disability agency. Devadoss was able to help the student contact a braille printing press and get an accessible copy of the textbook she needed to

keep up with her sighted classmates.

On October 1, 2016 India and 21 other nations will begin a new era in accessible books. Through ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty, millions of people who are visually impaired or otherwise unable to read print materials will now enjoy increased access to braille, audio and other accessible book formats. A groundbreaking international agreement, the Marrakesh Treaty creates exceptions to intellectual property law that allow accessible versions of copyrighted

books to be produced and distributed, both within countries and across international borders. As these reforms take effect in the 22 ratifying countries, readers with visual impairments should find it increasingly easy to buy or borrow books in accessible formats.

"This treaty will definitely help," said Devadoss, who is currently enrolled in Perkins International's Educational Leadership Program. "Access to information is so essential for developing new ideas and building your relationship with the world. It's the right thing to do."

The United States has not yet ratified the Marrakesh Treaty. The agreement has backing from the Obama administration but still requires approval in the US Senate. Perkins School for the Blind has made advocacy information available for individuals who support everyone's right to read. Kim Charlson, executive director of the Perkins Library, has been working to encourage ratification of the treaty in her role as president of the American Council of the Blind.

"The Marrakesh Treaty will level the playing field and

make it possible for people with print disabilities to have access to valuable materials and information," said Charlson. "This translates to education, personal and professional growth and empowerment for everyone."

The treaty is formally named the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works by Visually Impaired Persons and Persons with Print Disabilities. It was adopted in 2013 at a diplomatic conference organized by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Marrakesh, Morocco. WIPO is an

agency of the United Nations that promotes the protection of intellectual property throughout the world.

Perkins president and CEO Dave Power urged every nation to ratify the treaty. Power said technology exists to share any book in accessible formats while protecting intellectual property rights. Such systems are now in place

in several countries, he said.

"Access to the printed word promotes independence for those who are visually impaired, and inclusion within their communities," said Power. "Now is the time to make every book available across any border to those who are visually impaired."

\* \* \*

## **First Artificial Pancreas Approved**

{Editor's note: This article was distributed by Chris Gray on the ACB leadership list and is edited. Chris writes:

"This is a huge step forward in the treatment of diabetes, currently only for type 1 diabetics but I'm sure that will change over time. Of course, no word

about price or its accessibility to a blind user.}

Medtronic Plc will bring to market the world's first artificial pancreas, after US regulators cleared the device for diabetics to automatically monitor blood sugar and supply insulin, replicating what a healthy version of the organ does on its own.

The Food and Drug Administration cleared the product, called MiniMed 670G, for patients with Type 1 diabetes who are at least 14 years old. It will let some diabetics turn over part of their daily routine of

finger prick tests and insulin injections to an automatic system. Along with lessening the burden of a condition that requires constant attention, it also offers hope that better blood sugar control at inconvenient times, such as at night, will ultimately improve long-term health.

"This first-of-its-kind technology can provide people with Type 1 diabetes greater freedom to live their lives without having to consistently and manually monitor baseline glucose levels and administer insulin," Jeffrey Shuren, director of FDA's Center for Devices and

Radiological Health, said in a statement. The FDA approved Medtronic's product months sooner than investors expected, and without going before a panel of outside advisers that often precedes the introduction of innovative products. In doing so, the agency also moved faster than European regulators, who are often first to clear medical devices.

### **How It Works**

The MiniMed 670G, which is about the size of a smart phone, wirelessly connects an insulin pump and a glucose monitor. Blood sugar levels are monitored

every five minutes by a sensor that reads just under the skin, the FDA said. A computer algorithm then ensures patients have the right amount of insulin, a hormone that's needed to turn blood sugar into energy. Medtronic expects the device to win approval outside the US next summer. Medtronic said it wouldn't be ready to introduce the 670G until the spring of 2017.

### **Type 1 Diabetes**

About 1.25 million people in the US have Type 1 diabetes, where the pancreas fails to produce any insulin, according to

the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. The condition typically presents in childhood, and patients walk a fine line, since too much or too little insulin can be life-threatening. Lax blood sugar control can lead to a host of additional health problems, including heart disease, stroke, kidney and nerve damage and blindness. Type 2, which is more common, is tied to obesity and typically

develops gradually. The Medtronic's device takes on the responsibilities of the human pancreas, which is tasked by the body with producing insulin in precise quantities. While Medtronic previously released a system that could shut off if glucose levels fell too low, it didn't automatically deliver the hormone when blood sugar climbed.

\* \* \*

## **CCB Membership Awards**

**by Vivian Younger, Membership Committee**

### **Chair**

Greetings to All Chapter  
and Affiliate  
Representatives

As most of you may know  
by now, I have been

appointed to be the CCB Membership Committee Chair. It would be awesome for the CCB Membership to double in size!

Is your chapter currently working on a project that will benefit individuals or your community? The Chapter of the Year Award (COTY Award) is presented by the CCB Membership Committee at each spring CCB conference and convention. At our April, 2014 convention, this award was presented to the Humboldt Council of the Blind for their efforts in getting audio description into their local movie theater. Chapter members had demonstrations, contacted the AMC

company and gave flyers to interested people.

We will be accepting letters from chapters for projects developed and completed in 2016. Please submit them to the CCB state office by February 15, 2017. In the letter, please explain the group chapter project, who benefited from the effort and the time-line of the project. We would like to be able to present this award at the upcoming 2017 Spring CCB conference and convention.

### **CCB Membership Incentive Awards**

How about winning one of the CCB Membership Incentive Awards in 2017! They are presented at



every CCB conference and convention to the chapters or Affiliates having the highest membership increase, and the other award is for the chapter/affiliate having the largest percentage of membership increase.

We occasionally offer longevity awards for those who have been in CCB for more than 25 or 50 years. If you have been in CCB for 25 years, ask for a 25-year

award. Likewise, if you have been in CCB for 50 years, ask for a 50-year award. Ask your chapter or affiliate president to contact the office with this information.

We sincerely urge all CCB chapters and affiliates to come together in order to work on building their membership! Let's do it!

\* \* \*

## **Letters**

### **from Walter Raineri**

Here is something a little different. Many have asked me to forward the link to the national radio program entitled "Our American Stories," which featured a bit about my journey into

blindness and how sailboat match racing fits into the larger puzzle of my life. The program aired October 4 across the United States and the world, and I thought you might enjoy a

little diversion from the norm. The link is [www.ouramericannetwork.org/story?title=Walter-Raineri-Blind-Sailing](http://www.ouramericannetwork.org/story?title=Walter-Raineri-Blind-Sailing).

BTW, the TV network CNN also produced a mini documentary about my team in the Blind Match Racing World Championships in which we won the Bronze Medal, and I will forward that link as well when it airs nationally.

Calm seas and fair winds to you. Walt

The CCB historian writes:

We know that the only important event in 1934 was the formation of CCB. But the archives reveals this:

**Companies Started:** Amana-refrigeration, home and commercial; Fuji-film for the movie industry; Bay Meadows Racetrack in San Mateo County; Mutual Broadcasting System: one of the big four broadcasters; first presentation dramas, The Lone Ranger and Superman; Muzak-music in department stores and elevators.

**Patents:** Glass cocktail shaker with strainer patented by Ray Cobel; service bay with hydraulic automobile lift by Guy Rosenbrook; three cone bit for oil drilling by Hughes Tool Company; chain reaction design for the atomic bomb by Leo Szilard.

**What things cost: average house--under \$6000; average yearly wages--\$1600; gallon of gas--10 cents; loaf of bread--8 cents; pound of hamburger--12 cents; Studebaker truck--\$625.**

**Miscellaneous: Alcatraz Island opened as federal prison; St. Louis Cardinals won the World Series; first Masters Golf Championship in Augusta, Georgia; first washateria opened in Fort Worth Texas; Babe Ruth, with an annual salary of \$35,000, hit 700th home run; Congress decreed that sound reproduction records would be the first non-embossed items eligible for mailing by Free Matter.**

**Jordan Mirander writes:**

**Hello all,**

**I really enjoyed myself at the East Los Angeles picnic of the California Council of the Blind last summer. I did not expect to see as many people there. I was not expecting to see anyone from Anaheim there. Andrea attended all the way from Anaheim. She and I probably commuted the most to get there because she came from Anaheim and I came from Corona. Besides that, people were so nice!**

**\* \* \***

**California Council of the Blind**

**Officers and Board as of July 1, 2016**

{Editor's note: The presence of an asterisk means that the individual served a partial term before the first full term.}

**President, Judy Wilkinson, San Leandro (16-18, 1st term)  
510-388-5079 c, judy.wilkinson@ccbnet.org**

**1st Vice President, Frank Welte, San Leandro (16-18, 1st term)  
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**2nd Vice President, Gabe Griffith, Concord (\*16-17, partial term)  
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**Secretary, Ardis Bazyn, Burbank (15-17, 1st term)  
818 238-9321 ardis.bazyn@ccbnet.org**

**Treasurer, Peter Pardini, Mill Valley (16-18, 4th term)  
415-990-9202 c, peter.pardini@ccbnet.org**

**Immediate Past President, Jeff Thom, Sacramento (16-??)  
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**Steve Fort, Alameda (15-17, 1st term)  
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**Vivian Younger, Downey (\*16-17, partial term)**

**562-879-6693 c, [vivian.younger@ccbnet.org](mailto:vivian.younger@ccbnet.org)**

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**Susan Glass, Associate Editor**

**Annette Carter**

**Roger Petersen**

**Bonnie Rennie**

**Donna Sanchez**

**Dr. Catherine Schmitt Whitaker**

**\* \* \***

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.