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

**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 900 words, 1800 max.**

**The deadline to submit material for the winter, 2021 issue of THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN is noon, November 15, 2020.**

**Shop at Amazon, donate to CCB. Access [smile.amazon.com/](https://smile.amazon.com/), log on to your account and select California Council of the Blind as your charity.**

**Please send all address changes to the Executive Office.**

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Editor's Corner, Mike Keithley .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>They Say, by Regina Brink .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>President's Message, Gabe Griffith .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Governmental Affairs Report, Jeff Thom .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Report from the CAAVLry, Frank Welte .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>President's Address at the 2020 CCB Convention, Judy Wilkinson .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>CCB Convention Report, Lorraine Brown and Rob Turner .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Summaries of 2020 CCB Convention Resolutions, Linda Porelle .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Tributes to Bonnie Rennie, Susan Glass .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Pursuing Jazz, the late Bonnie Rennie .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>5 Ways To Avoid An Accessibility Fail .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>ADA Celebration, Bernice Kandarian .....</b>	<b>73</b>

**First Timers Meeting 2020, Maile George .....76**

**18 Reasons to Keep Epsom Salt in Your Medicine Cabinet  
.....78**

**Feeling Overwhelmed? .....82**

**California Council of the Blind Officers and Directors ...86**

**Donations .....89**

## **Editor's Corner**

**By Mike Keithley**

### **A Special Note From Your Editors To All BC Readers**

You are receiving this second copy of the Summer Blind Californian because we, your editors, made an accidental but serious omission in the first release. We neglected to include Judy Wilkinson's "President's Address at the 2020 CCB Convention." We apologize to Judy, and to all of you.

Fall is here with lots of changes together with sadness and hope.

We've been saying farewell to Bonnie Rennie, who passed away on Thursday, July 9. You'll

find Susan Glass' compilation of tributes to Bonnie in this issue plus a poem published in the Summer, 2017 BC showing Bonnie at play.

And we have a new CCB president, Gabe Griffith. And man, I had to make all kinds of changes around the BC to reflect this important change, including Gabe's very first President's Message.

And speaking of presidents, be sure that you read Judy Wilkinson's President's Address at the 2020 CCB Convention. Judy reviews for us, the challenging waters that CCB has navigated for the last few years, as well as our successes, the hard

**work done by our membership, and our future course of action.**

**Also we have new officers and directors— check out the CCB convention report plus the Officers and Directors section for updated contact information.**

**Jeff Thom sent an upbeat Governmental Affairs Report, the CAAVLRV is rising, you'll**

**enjoy the report of the very first CCB virtual convention, a pace setter in the blindness community.**

**We have two articles concerning the 30th anniversary of the ADA, what to do when feeling overwhelmed, and how Epsom's salts is good to have around.**

**Have fun!**

**\* \* \***

# **They Say**

**By Regina Brink**

**They Call me blind but I see the injustice while they close  
their eyes.**

**They say my life is hard but I feel the joy they'll never  
realize.**

**They claim touch is no substitute for bright lights,  
But my pulsating mind and body take me to higher  
heights.**

**They tell me I am impaired, defective, at a loss, sightless,  
But I see inner beauty, kind hearts, and unconditional  
love despite this.**

**They call me blind and the whole world would agree,  
But nothing they say can make me believe, convince me.**

**I know in my spirit,  
When it is most important,**

**I See!**

**\* \* \***

# **How I got here and where we're going**

**By Gabe Griffith**

I've been thinking for a while about what I would like to say in my first President's Message for the Blind Californian. I've been around CCB for quite a while and have been blessed to be able to meet many of you, but I don't feel like we've gotten to have a lot of in-depth conversations. To that end, I thought I'd share a bit about myself so that hopefully you feel like you know a bit more about who you've elected as your President.

I was born and raised for my first few years in the Pacific North West. My parents and I moved from Salem Oregon to Yakima

Washington when I was only a couple of years old. That's where we were living when I lost my sight in 1984 due to a reaction from the Flu Virus.

I was only 5 years old and in Kindergarten at the time. Apparently there were a few signs shortly before it happened, but the way I remember it, I woke up one morning in February and couldn't see a thing. My mom thought I was just trying to get out of going to school that day. Once my parents realized I was truly blind, I spent the next few days in the hospital undergoing any number of tests that I don't remember at all.

Gradually I began getting some vision back in my right eye but never got more than about 5 percent, and nothing in the left eye. My mom still tells a story about one day only a few months after I'd lost my sight when she was trying to take care of my younger sister, do laundry and who knows what else. Apparently I was asking her to take me up to my friend's house who lived a couple of houses up the hill. She finally had enough of me and told me I could walk out the front door, down the two steps, across the lawn, step in to the gutter and walk up the hill. The next thing she knew, she heard the screen door slam and wondered what she'd done. By the time she made it out to the

street, I was half way to my buddy's house, and he was in his front yard talking me on my way. I tell her to this day that it was that almost literal push out the door that has given me the confidence to get to where I am today.

The district we lived in didn't have any kind of vision program, so my parents were preparing to send me to the school for the blind in Vancouver, about 2 and a half hours away. The resource teacher in my district was working on her Master's degree, and changed her focus in order to be qualified to teach me braille and the other skills I would need. Beth and I became very close over the next few years, as many of us do with our

vision teachers. At times I think I spent as much time at her house as at mine. Over 35 years later, we are still in occasional contact.

In 1991 my family moved to California. I spent the next few years receiving services from the Fresno County Office of Education. My TVI and O&M teachers were great. They continued with giving me the skills I would need beyond high school. At the time, I really didn't appreciate my TVI forcing me to go ask my teachers about books, handouts or other class activities in advance. Once I graduated high school and went on to college, I looked back thanking her. Before you ask, yes, I have spoken with all of those former teachers and

thanked them for helping to put me on this path.

As I mentioned, there wasn't even a vision program in Yakima Washington in the mid 80s. When we moved to California, we lived in a small town. During all this time, I was rarely around any other kids or adults who were blind or low vision. It wasn't until I reached college and met Gene Lozano that I really spent much time around another blind person. At the time, I couldn't really see myself being around a lot of other people who were blind or visually impaired. I'd been around sighted folks all my life, and that's what I knew. Eventually I joined the Blind Students of California as they were

known at the time. Finally I let Gene talk me in to coming to a chapter meeting. From there I became more and more involved in CCB, including committees and running for the CCB Board. As you can tell, I've completely swapped my opinion from what it was 20 years ago.

One thing we want to do in CCB is to rebuild our membership levels. Our membership committee has a plan and will be reaching out to chapter and affiliate presidents soon. We also need to find a steady revenue stream. I am happy to say that I have already been involved in a couple of conversations regarding that. I don't have concrete plans to share now, but when things start

happening, we will definitely be reaching out to everyone.

All of these things will help us to continue making CCB the best organization of and for folks who are blind or have low vision. This organization belongs to all of us, and without each and every person, we are not as strong.

I am so blessed and proud to be part of The California Council of the Blind. I can't express how honored I am to have been elected as President of this great organization. We have a lot of work ahead of us the next couple of years, but I know we will work together to accomplish it.

The thing that has always drawn me to CCB

is that it is the membership that drives what we do. I can try to help facilitate ideas for things like revenue and membership, but it is all of us working together that will make them happen. It is you, the members that elect us to the Board, and direct us on what you want us to do. To that end, please, if you have any ideas or just want to talk, please reach out to me by phone or email. I can't always answer if you call,

so please leave a message. Depending on what's going on, it could take a couple of days to return a message, but I promise I'll get back to you.

You can reach me by phone at 925-222-5762 or by email at [gabe.griffith@ccbnet.org](mailto:gabe.griffith@ccbnet.org)

Thank you for the opportunity to serve, and I look forward to us working together over the next couple of years.

\* \* \*

## **Governmental Affairs Report**

**By Jeff Thom**

Occasionally I struggle to put enough words together for one of these columns. Other times, like this one, I

struggle with figuring out how to limit my message.

Before we begin talking about the state Legislature, I want to

acknowledge Gene Lozano and a number of CCB members from throughout the state who, at Gene's request, advocated on issues that were being heard by the California Building Standards Commission. More stringent accessibility requirements for public housing, and a requirement for the federal color yellow on detectable warnings were adopted. Moreover, there is a real chance that requirements for raised sidewalk paths will be adopted during this code cycle. To those who testified, your voices really did matter!

Turning to the state Legislature, let's start with a general description of the 2020 legislative session. For the most part,

the name of the game is wait until next year (or maybe longer, who knows). Most bills have been withdrawn or held by the committees and are thus dead until they can be re-introduced in the next session. One way in which CCB has been impacted, whether for good or ill, was the issue of scooters, which will not be acted upon this year. However, we have made some allies in the Legislature and have some support for some of our positions that we hope will be back on the table next year. In fact, the scooter companies themselves have reportedly accepted the idea of a requirement for tactile identification on each device. Enabling people who are blind to

identify a device that has been left on the sidewalk by a negligent user is a fairly inexpensive method of avoiding a rather poor public relations situation for the scooter companies. The more incidents of this nature that occur in which a blind person is unable to identify even the company who owns the scooter, the greater will be the pressure for more stringent state or local regulation, so there is actually some real incentives for these entities to agree to some requirements that are also good social policy.

We also have other issues that we have had to put aside this year, such as continuing our efforts in the special education field and that of accessible

medication labeling. Hopefully, we can work on these items during the next year or two.

Turning to the state budget, the news so far is reasonably positive. As many of you know, the Governor, in his May budget revision, proposed some rather Draconian cuts, including some program eliminations, for both education and especially programs for seniors and people with disabilities. Not only did the Legislature push back on these cuts, recognizing that this would be the very worst time imaginable for them to occur, but the Governor seemed to recognize the sense of this approach and went along with the Legislature's rejection of

most of these reductions. This Governor, unlike his predecessor, seems really to have seniors and people with disabilities as one of his priorities, and I will return to this theme later in this article. Notwithstanding the Governor's potentially good intentions, a great deal of uncertainty remains insofar as state and local program expenditures are concerned. First, we have no idea how much federal moneys will flow to the states, either during the short-term period of this election year or in the longer term subsequent to the end of this pandemic, whenever that might be. Secondly, with the pandemic worsening in California, we don't know the extent to which

additional state Covid-19-related expenditures will be necessary, nor do we yet know the extent to which this worsening situation will impact state tax revenues for the fiscal year that has just begun. Finally, with taxes having just become due on July 15, we will now begin to learn the extent to which revenues for the past year suffered because of the pandemic. By the time you read this, we will know whether, during its last month of session that will end by September 1, the Legislature and the Governor will be forced to make additional budget cuts. In fact, it is even possible that the Governor could call a pre-November election special legislative session to address spending in general or for

**the pandemic in particular. Bottom line, your guess is as good as mine!**

**But let's return to the theme that the budget process did seem to indicate a real concern for the needs of seniors and people with disabilities. The Governor's proposed budget cuts that were ultimately not accepted included elimination of community-based services for Medi-Cal recipients designed to keep them out of nursing homes and assisted living facilities. However, the same budget revision also contained a proposal for a Medi-Cal benefit to give Medi-Cal recipients the services they needed to remain in their own homes, in recognition of the high death rates from**

**Covid-19 for people in institutional settings. This proposed Medi-Cal benefit was referred to as a long-term care at home benefit. If you think this was somewhat of an oxymoron, then join the club, because the advocacy organizations felt the same way. However, even though the program cuts were withdrawn, the proposal for a long-term care at home benefit was not. To make a long story very short, this benefit, which was initially viewed as beginning by the beginning of 2021, is unlikely to begin until at least the middle of next year. However, from the perspective of services to people who are blind or have low vision, it gives us a unique opportunity to**

**seek Medi-Cal reimbursement for the delivery of specialized services for Medi-Cal recipients with vision loss for those either transitioning from a hospital or nursing facility back to the community, or attempting to avoid placement in a nursing facility. We are constantly looking for additional ways to method services provided pursuant to the Older Individuals who are Blind grant program and this is a golden opportunity to educate policymakers about the need for these services and include them in the service mix allowed under the program. Vision rehabilitation, orientation and mobility, assistive technology and technology training, are**

**included in the types of services for which we must advocate. Although both legislative and executive branch discussions regarding this benefit are very fluid and may well last for six or even 12 months, this situation gives you time to inform your state legislators about the need for Medi-Cal to pay for these services that are so important to living independently, as a part of any long-term care at home benefit.**

**Finally, we are beginning to provide training that will, if successful, enhance our ability to successfully advocate in Sacramento and elsewhere. On August 10, I conducted our initial training on the state**

legislative process to the co-chairs of the CCB Governmental Affairs Committee, Alice Turner and Ardis Bazyn, as well as to two members of the ACB Capitol Chapter, chapter president Regina Brink and Stephanie Watts. The more members trained in the complexities

of the process, the better our chances for legislative success in our advocacy efforts. If you feel that you have expertise in areas of advocacy and could be an effective part of the process with legislative procedure training, then I urge you to let me know.

\* \* \*

## **Report from the CAAVLry!**

**By Frank Welte**

The California Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss, which has been a statewide affiliate of the California Council of the Blind since May, is growing. As of this writing, CAAVL has 28 members, we have held several meetings and we are beginning to activate committees.

Even though the majority of Californians who experience significant sight loss are older individuals, the services for older individuals who are blind are severely underfunded. Most providers of senior programs are not equipped to address the specific needs of visually

impaired participants in their programs. Our medical insurance system does not provide the level of rehabilitation services and related durable medical equipment for people living with visual disabilities that is provided for people experiencing other disabling conditions. The vocational rehabilitation system devotes only a tiny fraction of its resources to serve older blind individuals. In short, the system is broken, and we need to organize an all-out effort to get it fixed. CAAVL will lead that effort here in California.

Because every member of CCB can expect to find themselves in the older blind population sooner or later,

this is an issue that will affect each of us, so we all have a personal stake in reforming the older blind service system. We invite you to join CAAVL and to become part of the change we want to see in California.

Here's how to join California Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss.

To join, send your \$25 dues to our Treasurer, Denise Weddle, at the following address.

Denise Weddle

4058 Moore St.

Los Angeles, CA 90066

Also, we'll need your contact information for our member roster. We need the following information.

**Name:**  
**Home address:**  
**Preferred phone number:**  
**Preferred Email address:**  
**Vision status (totally blind, legally blind, low vision, fully sighted):**  
**Your preferred alternate media format (braille, large print, audio, Email):**  
**Disclosure status: (disclose, do not disclose):**

You may elect to share your contact information with CAAVL committee chairs for their use in the conduct of

**official business, or to keep this information private. However, we are required to submit this information to the CCB office.**

**Please send this information to Denise Weddle at the following Email address:**

**[deaniew21@verizon.net](mailto:deaniew21@verizon.net)**

**For more information, please contact Frank Welte, CAAVL's Interim President, by email at:**

**[Frank.A.Welte@gmail.com](mailto:Frank.A.Welte@gmail.com)**

**or by phone at:  
510-541-1442.**

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# **President's Address at the 2020 CCB Convention**

**By Judy Wilkinson**

**With slight editing for timeliness, here is the address I delivered at the Friday evening session of the 2020 Virtual Convention of The California Council of the Blind.**

**Good evening CCB members and friends, those assembled here in our Zoom room and those joining us far and wide on ACB radio. Our convention theme is CCB's 2020 Vision for the Future! Well my mind's eye definitely has 2020 vision as I picture myself and fellow officers sitting at the head table, with members, colleagues and friends scattered**

**throughout the ballroom. We all look forward to the day when we can be physically together again, but meanwhile there are advantages to these virtual events. For one thing, at our virtual awards banquet tomorrow, we don't have to eat a set predictable meal: half of which we don't like and half of which we can't cut with the dull knives they provide, and we don't have to dress up.**

**The meeting space may be virtual, but the thanks are very real. There are more people to thank than I possibly have time to mention. To highlight just a few: I could never**

have gotten through these past 4 years without the wise counsel and institutional memory from Jeff Thom, our immediate past president. And can any of us imagine a time "BL," Before Lisa? Lisa Thomas, our indefatigable treasurer has brought our records and financial management practices up to the highest, nonprofit sector standards. And how can I thank our technical operations group (the TOG) led by Vita Zavoli and Phill Obregon, which has put our organization accessibly online and brought us into the computer age, while recognizing and respecting the fact that not all our members possess high-level technology skills. Thanks to all our other hard-

working committees whose day-to-day efforts move the organization forward.

I wish I could single out every board member I've worked with for the specific acknowledgment each deserves and for the contributions in time, talent and treasure each of you has made, and perhaps most of all, for your unwavering commitment to civil discourse and mutual respect, even in the face of contentious and momentous decisions. You have upheld the best traditions of openness and fairness that will always remain the hallmark of our organization. Please join me in thanking these dedicated, conscientious board members, and trust

them to represent your best interests in the future, as they have striven to do in the past.

Nicole Pacheco, our Operations Manager joined CCB only 3 years ago, but her thorough record-keeping, her willingness and ability to learn new skills including how to create Braille documents, and her responsiveness to the myriad requests that so many people make of her, have made her a mainstay of our organization.

And of course I can't forget "wireless caller" aka Gabe Griffith, who will succeed me as president tomorrow (unless he thinks better of it in time). For the past two years he has phoned almost every Sunday evening to help

formulate our plans for the week; he has assumed ever-increasing responsibilities, taking more and more of the load off my shoulders.

Capping a lifetime of service to CCB, it has been my honor and yes my burden, to serve as your president; this is the fourth time I have come before you to give an annual report of our work, a sort of CCB state-of-the-union message. Because I cannot possibly cover all I wish to tonight, I invite you to read my article in the Summer 2020 issue of the Blind Californian where I review recurring themes over the 10 years I wrote columns: 6 as its editor and 4 as your president.

**I have often been asked, how many hours does being president really take? After all Jeff did it for 10 years while holding down his full time job at the state Capitol; and Gabe faces the same challenge. You know, it's not that this job is literally a full-time, 40-hour a week endeavor. No, it's the unexpected early morning call from someone on the East Coast who forgot the time difference; it's the crisis flaring-up requiring immediate decision or action, all too often without time for adequate consultation; it's the poignant call from the woman in Florida a few days ago seeking help for a blind man whose family turned him out into the COVID-infested Los Angeles streets, or**

**someone seeking service for her friend needing after school care for her 8-year-old blind child. It's the angry caller who never would consider joining a blindness organization, who nonetheless indignantly demands orientation and mobility services from us; it's the hurtful posting of an embarrassing private message by a disgruntled member to our public lists; it's the destructive use of FaceBook to complain about a CCB matter better handled within the CCB family. It's facing a serious allegation that the accuser wasn't willing to back up with evidence; my ability to concentrate on my CCB work suffered for months as a result of that incident.**

**These have been years of challenge and change, years of success and failure, and years that bridge two generations of leaders.**

**The challenges come as no surprise to most of us: finances, membership, modernization, outreach, and prioritization of resources, to name the most familiar. But we face compelling new challenges as well: challenges of inclusion that call upon us to incorporate diverse perspectives, needs and identities into our work and mission; challenges that test our ability to adapt the grass-roots, democratic traditions of a member-controlled organization to the technological, economic,**

**professionalized leadership, and legal demands of today.**

**Internal organizational issues may seem boring or remote, but without the coordinated work of many people, no modern organization can hope to accomplish very much.**

**Let's turn first to the thorniest challenge: that of putting CCB on a sound financial footing, or put more simply, getting money. Our financial situation was dire when I took office, and sadly, it remains so now; for over 2 years now, most of us have taken no money for our CCB expenses. Driven in equal measure by desperation and creativity, we have undertaken a number of fund-raising initiatives—regrettably**

without the desired results thus far. When we hired a CEO in September, 2016, it was largely with the goal of pursuing grant opportunities and other fund-raising endeavors. Until Paul Shane's departure in 2018, we bore the cost of his full-time position but without the hoped-for return on investment.

One major takeaway from this effort is the realization that grants, though seeming a logical source of funding, are a very mixed blessing. Our first successful grant was for a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and FDIC summit and curriculum to inform our members how to better manage their finances and become more

knowledgeable consumers of financial services. We met our obligation under the grant by distributing materials and holding a workshop during convention: worthwhile work to be sure, but carrying no financial gain for the organization.

We spent a huge amount of time developing a 500-page grant application to the state Department of Rehabilitation for funds under the Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) program, an effort in which we did not prevail. We received a VISTA grant allowing us to fund 3 positions, but were prevented by the rules of the program from recruiting from outside the pool of VISTA volunteers

or from taking the time needed to advertise the position widely in the blindness community. We outfitted 3 employees with computers and software, but they didn't work out. Taking into account the time spent on preparing the application, on training, and on technology, the effort cost us a great deal of money while yielding no benefit to our membership.

We finally hit the jackpot at the end of 2018 when we received an Energy Upgrade California (EUC) grant to educate our population and other disabled and senior communities about the state's Time of Use program for saving money on the cost of gas and electricity. The grant

enabled us to hire the talented James Collins who hit the ground running when our first outreach officer quit after just 3 months. Because of further delays in funding cycles, we are still struggling until the next cycle begins.

So in the end, we came to understand that grants and service contracts do not generally contribute to long-term financial stabilization, and while allowing us to do useful work, often require recipients to alter their focus and priorities to fit the requirements of the funder.

However the search for grant funding had two incalculable benefits. We shortened our mission statement: "To increase

**the independence and equality for all Californians who are blind or low vision." That fits nicely into a 30-second elevator pitch! In March 2017, the board adopted our Case For Support. Why do I mention these under funding? Because a clear mission statement and compelling case for support explain who we are, what we do and why anyone should support us financially; such a document is indispensable for fund-raising efforts in the modern, nonprofit world.**

**In 2017, for the first time ever, the board was obliged to request funds from our endowment, the Newel Perry Trust. Necessity has forced us to withdraw further funds**

**from the trust in the following 2 years, and sadly, the fund will soon be reduced to its corpus, if nothing changes.**

**In the interim, we have tried a number of other fund-raising ideas: a comedy club and silent auction; Canes Across CA; fireworks sales, and Dining in the Dark, a delightful event which I hope we can bring back when possible, but which in its initial iteration brought in little profit.**

**Our single greatest loss outside the grants field involved the 2018 major gifts rampup (MGRU) campaign undertaken with Development Systems Inc. (DSI). The idea was deceptively, not to say beguilingly simple: using**

various databases to identify a cohort of wealthy people in the Sacramento area, then reaching out to and engaging them through a structured series of steps, culminating in the recruitment and engagement of new and influential supporters. Without going into all the details, it is enough to say that the effort did not work, and we had to pull the plug, on the campaign and on our relationship with DSI. Here again though, something of value did emerge from the rubble: our streamlined Case for Support with its 10 identified CCB wins since our founding in 1934, and our 4 action goals for CCB.

Based in large part on this work, and thanks to the hard work of our Publications Committee led by Linda Porelle, we were able in 2018 and again in 2019, to send appeal letters to our entire contact list, and plans are underway for this year's campaign. It is difficult to determine how much of what people donate to CCB is directly attributable to this effort, but indications are that it is enough to warrant continuation.

In September of 2019, we held our first telephonic auction, modeled on those conducted by ACB. With heartening support from our chapters, members and friends who donated or purchased items and

services, we generated respectable profits of around \$8,500 while also, we believe, generating a heightened level of engagement and awareness among our constituency. This year's auction is scheduled for September 20th, and despite hard times, we feel optimistic that we will certainly add to CCB coffers.

Tomorrow, beginning our afternoon session, Patrick Netter, CEO of OntheMuV, together with CCB board member Steve Bauer, will officially launch our partnership with OntheMuV, manufacturer of two exciting minitreadmills we believe will prove of great value to the blindness community and that we hope will

generate ongoing revenue for CCB. We have been working with these great folks since early in my term; naturally we had hoped to be further along with the project by now, but there have been predictable and unpredictable delays. But you will soon be able to order your own: really! Really!

Finally in regard to fund-raising, although you will understand why I can't go into detail, CCB is the co-beneficiary of a substantial trust left by a recently deceased, longtime and much-respected member. The trust is being challenged by a disappointed family member, but our counsel is strongly of the belief that our prospects are

good for ultimately receiving the funds our late member and friend wanted us to have.

The next broad area I want to touch upon is what I call bringing CCB into the 21st century. Statewide grass-roots organizations like ours, with a decentralized local chapter-based structure allowing considerable autonomy to the local groups, and with much statewide decision making authority reserved to the membership in annual convention, is not ideally situated to compete for funding in the modern world or even to easily comply with the multitude of reporting and documentary requirements of the nonprofit world. We have

gone a long way though: adopting a number of policies including gift acceptance, travel and mileage, overtime, volunteer, member information privacy and others; we adopted an employee handbook; beginning the standardization of chapter and special-interest affiliate reporting and accountability practices such as officer information sheets, roster maintenance procedures and so much more. But there is still much more to do including the completion of sexual harassment policies and implicit bias prevention strategies, implementation of parallel policies at chapter level to those developed for the state organization, expanded

**use of the AMMS system to reach out to recently lapsed members, completion of a comprehensive members-only website area. When several board members first attended a workshop put on by NANOE, (National Association of nonprofit Organizations and Executives) we purchased what I still think is a valuable database with all kinds of reference resources such as board evaluation instruments; models for developing strategic plans, and so much more. And yes, that infamous donor base for the entire country.**

**Returning to a key area of communications, our website, like most websites, is an ever-**

**evolving reflection of our needs and capabilities, as well increasingly of legal requirements. The site has been totally modernized. With the help of webmaster Earline Hughes and the continued dedication and skill of the TOG, progress will continue, for a secure members area where we can post sensitive documents, allow members to pay dues, file documents, download data and so much more.**

**But the world of paper still exists! We finally have been able to throw out those old, rubber-band burned stacks of out-of-date 1-page flyers with the development (thanks once again to our Publications Committee) of our new large postcard-sized flyer.**

**We still need a revised trifold brochure. Hand-outs still work as James Collins, our EUC educational officer can attest, as he hands them out at events he attends on our behalf. And if we could only have everything in Spanish, oh brave new world!**

**Our crowning achievement in governance is the adoption by this convention last year, after two years of hard work and a failed vote in 2018, of new Bylaws, Bylaws without which we couldn't conduct official business such as voting at this convention. So far as we know, CCB is the only ACB affiliate to incorporate the option for conducting business. We**

**are dealing with bylaws changes this weekend and future tweaking will obviously be necessary.**

**Overlapping the fundraising and governance categories is another key innovation. Paul Shane taught us the importance of tracking our volunteer hours. Paul's data collection allowed us to estimate that in 2018 our members contributed 1.4 million dollars (at a value of \$24 per hour) worth of volunteer time. For donors eager to assess member support and engagement as a measure of organizational worth, or who require in-kind contributions, such data are of immense and largely untapped value. Now the only trick is to get members and chapters to**

**capture these data and maintain reliable records. If only to honor the work of our members, we must never overlook this most vivid evidence of your enduring commitment.**

**In terms of streamlining procedures: we have made initial steps toward a master calendar. No need to wonder when the next board meeting happens: every 2nd Thursday; presidents calls: 4th Mondays. Ultimately we'd love to include recurring chapter events: we never again want to miss Greater LA's baseball-themed event: third Saturday in October?**

**In my mind, a related area which desperately needs work is managing and keeping good records. The most reliable records**

**we have are those under Nicole's care. She can pull up former exhibitor and sponsorship packets, old officer information sheets, chapter tax forms and so much more so we can revise and update without re-inventing the wheel. Our treasurer Lisa Thomas has spent literally hundreds of hours untangling our financial records. Slowly but surely she is bringing order from chaos. We save hundreds of dollars a year because Lisa provides accounting activities we once paid for.**

**When records are well kept, amazing things can be accomplished. For example Nicole has used the Amms system, which goes back to 2014, to determine which members did not renew membership**

**across several years. Where are chapter charters and constitutions? We don't know. Who have we given awards to? Other than the hall of famers, (and even that information isn't up-to-date) we don't have that information where it belongs: on our website. What about board and committee minutes? For instance, we need a single list of all board motions so we can go to one place to determine without difficulty what we did when.**

**Two other areas of concern have undergone change and rethinking in the past few years: the annual convention and the Council office. I cannot imagine how we ever managed to prepare for**

**two in-person conventions a year! Organizing one, even before the pandemic, has become a year-round project. In November of 2016, Gene Lozano, our longtime convention coordinator, prepared a comprehensive report on conventions based on extensive input from our members. Now, in addition to a full-time convention committee, we have a convention budget and post-convention profit-loss analysis. I am proud of the sponsorships I have brought in: some \$15,000 last year. Still, a lot of time has been spent scrambling for a hotel for 2019 after the Rancho Cordova Marriott bailed on us. To consider future in-person conventions we must balance overall cost, food and beverage**

**minimums, facility adequacy, transportation cost and accessibility, and compliance with ADA and state accessibility requirements. We look forward to a time when we can combine the best of virtual and in-person meetings to engage, inform and energize the broadest range of our members.**

**Continuing on the subject of in-person gatherings, in 2018 we conducted two regional meetings in southern California and the Fresno area. Based upon the positive response to those events, we spent a lot of time anticipating the possibility of holding several linked regional events as an alternative to meeting in a single,**

**statewide convention location. Intervening events forced us to move quickly to this year's virtual convention, but again the things we learned will not be lost. Rob Turner has taken the lead in dragging us, many kicking and screaming, on to the Zoom platform, and it is no exaggeration to say that without Rob, this moment wouldn't be happening. We are using Zoom's webinar feature with its more advanced tools and may purchase it for the future. Yes, Virginia, there will always be a Zoom room.**

**The Council office has always held a special place in the hearts of our members. It was a place which people could visit, a source of assistance with**

print-related issues, a source of consultation and sharing on any number of subjects. In 2017, when our downtown lease ended, the board confronted a classic conundrum. Should we move to an office that was maximally accessible to public transit, or to a less expensive but less transportation-friendly location in what many considered a more attractive neighborhood? This provoked one of the most heated debates and one of the most closely contested votes of my tenure. Having opted for the more convenient office, we have nevertheless been able to cut costs since by moving to a smaller suite in the same complex. But when our lease is up in 3 years,

we should revisit the whole concept of an organizational office.

In addition, we have begun implementing a rotational phone answering system whereby different members can answer the phones during times when Nicole, our one employee, is engaged in other matters that demand her full attention or is out of the office on business. We need to make more consistent use of this mechanism and the extensive resource guide which that team has developed. Now if we could only get a decent physical phone system in the office!

Amidst all this streamlining, one form of diminution we distinctly

do not like is our decline in membership which now stands at around 600. As evidenced by her presentation earlier this evening, Cindy Hollis's energy and enthusiasm are inspiring; I love her 4 E's: embrace, engage, empower, and effort. Because of better record keeping, we hope to improve member retention, especially under the guidance of our new membership committee chair, Guillermo Robles, who conducted such a fine virtual first-timers' event on June 1.

Retention and recruitment are two sides of the same coin. We've lost chapters: Compton; Solano; and San Diego, and soon we must deal with others currently

missing in action or on life support. But at the same time, the CCB family does have a new affiliate: the California Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss (CAAVL). Congratulations to Frank Welte, Bob Acosta and all who have been involved in the amazingly rapid scaling-up of this vibrant new affiliate. Also, while not an official affiliate, our Diabetics Group, the idea of which was so dear to the heart of our beloved Ken Metz, meets monthly.

If adversity furnishes the occasion for resilience, the debacle of our major gifts ramp-up campaign offered another superb illustration. I don't know what I would have done without 2019's 9-member Phoenix

**Committee, appointed to chart our future course: a committee which worked hard to envision a path forward for CCB. With sober realism, with respect for history, and with openness to the future, the Phoenix committee charted the way to many of the initiatives currently defining our course and marking our revival.**

**One cost-saving strategy we were reluctantly forced to adopt in 2019 was suspension of braille and large-print publication of our quarterly magazine the Blind Californian. Aply and conscientiously edited by Mike Keithly, the BC continues to be published in an electronic version, and it is our hope to**

**resume its production in other formats as soon as possible. However there will be a special issue of the BC, available in braille and large-print and \$20 to commemorate the life and unequalled accomplishments and contributions of our beloved Cathie Skivers, I know Mike will include some of your heart-felt and heart-filled comments from this evening.**

**Saving the best for last, our advocacy work remains, as it has always been, our proudest achievement as well as our raison d'etre. In the legislative realm, and increasingly in the administrative and judicial arenas as well, CCB has continued to punch far above its weight on behalf**

of its members and all Californians who are blind or low vision. During my term, we have worked in partnership with the California Foundation for Independent Living (CFIL) on successful structured negotiations with Airbnb to ensure that its lodging resources will be available on terms of equality to guidedog users and persons with mobility disabilities, and to ensure that its website and host-to-guest communications modalities will be accessible. Jeff sits at the table on Governor Newsom's Long-term Care Taskforce, part of the governor's broader initiative on aging which addresses the state's approach to understanding and meeting the needs of its

growing senior population. At the invitation of Brian Bashin, CEO of the San Francisco Lighthouse, we have had preliminary discussions, interrupted by the pandemic, about joint efforts among California advocacy groups and service agencies aimed at securing state funding to help replace the resources lost to community-based services through elimination of nonvocational funding under the Federal Rehabilitation Act. Tomorrow, note our resolution in this area. We have worked to expand and ensure the reliability and quality of audio-description in movie theaters such as those in the AMC chain and our ongoing case with the

**Paladio cinema group. We have worked to expand voting accessibility in Alameda and San Mateo counties, as we learned this afternoon during Paul Spenster's presentation, we've made great advances in terms of accessible voting. We provided key input about autonomous vehicle (AV) accessibility rules development to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC); and been kept constantly informed and very much in the mix by Gene Lozano's monitoring and advocacy on transportation and infrastructure regulations and more recently on national parks reservation systems accessibility.**

**In the impact litigation arena, we're still**

**negotiating, with the invaluable assistance of our public-interest legal counsel, on the Hinkle versus California Department of Health Care Services case, seeking to obtain accessible documentation.**

**Above all else in the advocacy arena, we must be inspired by the impact we continue to have in the Legislature. We were instrumental in sunseting the useless and burdensome California Guide Dog board, an almost unheard-of success in the annals of bureaucracy where boards and agencies drift on in perpetuity. Through two key pieces of legislation our guide dogs and their handlers are better protected against**

economic loss due to attack. In the educational context, legislation promoted by CCB has expanded and clarified the availability of O&M services to students, and has given districts and individual teachers more authority and discretion to incorporate the extended core curriculum (ECC) into the range of special-education services available to blind and low vision students. And bearing in mind that the greatest advocacy sometimes consists in what is prevented, there are those bad bills that we have helped to make less bad or persuaded legislators not to adopt. In all of this, Jeff Thom's singular skill and unparalleled experience in the legislative branch has

been instrumental, and his role in the modern history of our civil rights cannot be overstated. He is ably assisted by our strong Governmental Affairs Committee co-chaired by Alice Turner and Ardis Bazyn. That committee will soon embark on training by Jeff to further serve our community in this all important arena.

I have characterized my administration as providing a bridge between generations. I represent the last leadership from the postwar or so-called baby-boom generation. Now, with the accession of people like Gabe and Sarah, the proverbial torch is being passed to a new generation, from leaders in their 60s and 70s to

those in their 30s and 40s. In view of the old battles still to be won and the new struggles yet to be fought, it is time that this should be so. Old ideas should be revisited and new ones tried. For all of us, regardless of age, and whether we are worn down or invigorated by challenges, one overarching fact irrefutably binds us together spanning the generations: if there were no CCB, somebody would have to invent it.

Let me express two final thank you's. First, my Sweetie! Steve has been my rock every day of the past 4 years. He has contributed his time, talent and our treasure to me and to the organization.

In closing then, I thank you our CCB community from the bottom of my heart for the opportunity to serve this organization and our cause, and as immediate past president, I pledge to do whatever I can to advance our goals. So this is thank you, but not good-bye.

\* \* \*

## **CCB Convention Report**

**By Lorraine Brown, SVCB Convention Delegate, and Rob Turner, SVCB Alternate Delegate**

{Editor's note: This report originated in the July, 2020 SVCB In Touch newsletter.}

**From Lorraine**

**The 2020 CCB Conference and Convention has made history. We have attended the convention and have not left our homes. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the entire convention was conducted through the use of our phones and computers. Lorraine Brown and Rob Turner were elected as SVCB delegate and alternate delegate respectively**

**during the virtual SVCB monthly meeting in May.**

**The various CCB affiliate and committee meetings began June 1 with the First Timer's Workshop, and ended on June 20 after the last general session.**

**Saturday, June 6 was the Golden State Guide Dog Handlers, Inc. (GSGDHI) business meeting and program. After the business meeting, during the program, the attendees were asked to respond to one or more of three questions: If your dog had a superpower, what would it be and why? What is**

**your dog's favorite toy, and how do you solicit interactive play? What is your favorite book featuring a dog?**

**As you can probably guess, the discussion was very funny and lively. We heard about flying dogs, telepathic dogs, oinking pig toys, etc.**

**Sunday June 7 was the California Library Users of America (CLUA) affiliate business meeting, which included election of officers. During the program, attendees discussed library advocacy in the current environment, and engaging the blind community toward growing the membership and involvement in CLUA.**

**Thursday, June 11, at 7 PM was the Board of**

**Directors meeting. In the past, we have attended Board meetings that went on for over four hours. Happily, this one was less than two hours. There was the usual business meeting. President Judy Wilkinson went over the slate of people running for office. She said that as of Thursday afternoon, there were 160 people who had registered for the convention. She also stated that the registration deadline had been changed from June 12 to noon on June 17. In addition, it was noted that the various chapters had donated 28 gift cards for door prizes during the general sessions.**

**Before the meeting was adjourned, President Judy Wilkinson thanked**

**two out-going Board members, Charlene Ornelas and Jeff Thom, for all of their help and service to CCB.**

**On Saturday, June 13 at 8:30 AM, many women in CCB attended the Women's Group Virtual Breakfast Meeting. It was a very informal group of women, each speaking a few minutes about something, such as a memory that meant a lot to each speaker. We all listened and learned much.**

**On Sunday, June 14, after joining the organization, Lorraine attended the virtual meeting of the California Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss (CAAVL). It was the annual business meeting of the new**

**affiliate of CCB and the parent AAVL, that included election of officers and Board members, as well as assignment of people to various committees.**

**The first general session of the 2020 CCB Conference and Convention was called to order at 1 PM on Friday, June 19 by President Judy Wilkinson. This began nearly 14 hours, over two days, of listening and absorbing lots of information, and hoping that the Internet connection would hold.**

**During the first session, we heard the following:**

**A panel discussion "Meeting the Unmet Need for Services to Seniors with Vision Loss." The panel discussed various**

issues surrounding trends in services to seniors, with emphasis on ways of filling the ever-expanding gap in services available to seniors who are blind or have low vision.

**"Voting Matters": Paul Spenser, Staff Attorney, Disability Rights California, Voting Rights Unit, San Diego, CA, discussed the importance of exercising our right to vote privately and independently, as well as the challenges and opportunities for the November election in light of the COVID-19 virus pandemic.**

**"An Update on Legal Cases Impacting People Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision": Sean Betouliere, Staff Attorney, Disability Rights**

**Advocates, Berkeley, CA, gave an update on some of the important legal work being done on behalf of people who are blind or have low vision. A suit against New York State concerning voting rights was successful. Other cases they are working on are: accessibility of food delivery services, accessibility of HBO Max, distance learning, employment discrimination, state park access, accessible medical documents, and the accessibility of the San Jose Sharks app.**

**The session ended with convention business. Bylaws amendments were approved. The Credentials Committee presented its report. It provided the number of votes given to**

each chapter and their delegates.

The second general session went from 6 PM to 8:45 PM on Friday. Cindy Hollis, American Council of the Blind, Membership Services Coordinator, Minneapolis, MN, gave a presentation, "The Building Blocks for a Strong Chapter, Member Recruitment and Retention." She gave three keys: engage, embrace, and empowerment to use when meeting new, possible members.

The major portion of this evening session was entitled, "Remembrances." This was a time for people to speak about chapter members and friends who have passed away this past year. Much of the time was devoted to

remembering Cathie Skivers, one of the greatest leaders the organized blindness movement has ever had.

Saturday at 9 AM began what was supposed to be two sessions of three hours each, with an hour break. However, the actual time was seven hours and 45 minutes, non-stop. The highlight was two contested Board seats during the election of officers. These two elections took over three hours. The procedure was quite fascinating. First came the roll call of each chapter. Each delegate had to raise a "virtual hand," un-mute the phone or computer, and give the chapter's vote. After the delegate vote, each member was allowed to

phone in or text to two phone numbers to give an individual vote. The first contest took over two and a half hours. After learning from the procedure the first time, the second election took much less time.

The CCB election results were the following:

**President: Gabe Griffith**

**First Vice President: Sara Harris**

**Second Vice President: SVCB's own Rob Turner (congrats from all of us.)**

**Treasurer: Lisa Thomas**

In addition, the new Board members are the following:

**Larry Gassman**

**Guillermo Robles**

**Jeff Thom**

**Frank Welte**

In addition to the marathon voting, the following was on the agenda:

A presentation by Vanda Pharmaceuticals.

The launch of CCB's OntheMov partnership (a small treadmill that is used sitting in a chair.)

Second reading and voting on bylaws amendments.

Reading, discussion, and voting on three resolutions.

Virtual awards banquet, which included awards from the Scholarship, Publications, Membership, and CCB Awards Committees.

There was supposed to be a hospitality get-together at 7 PM. However, by that time, I do not know

about Rob, but Lorraine had turned off her computer.

One last note: We did find out that there had been 218 people registered for the first virtual convention. In addition, there were 42 door prizes, with our own Rob Turner winning one of the last ones. Next year, we will all find out if there will be an in-person convention or another virtual one. I think it would be great if there could be a combination of both possibilities. With 218 registered attendees out of a total of nearly 600 CCB members, this showed that many people are interested, but for one reason or another do not, or cannot, travel to a convention in person.

## Rob Turner

Even though it wasn't necessary to travel to take part in this year's convention, it was still a whirlwind for me because I was responsible for setting up Webinar on Zoom. Most of my time was spent working on panelist invitations. For some unknown reason, the Webinar edit fields wouldn't allow me to populate them with copy and paste using Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge with three screen readers. Fortunately, Firefox with JAWS worked as expected. It was also tricky getting the links in the panelist invitation to work properly. I'll be far more efficient next time, now that I know what to do.

**I'm glad that ten SVCB members registered for the convention. We haven't had ten of us at an in-person convention in quite some time. Hats off to Lorraine for being a superb delegate. I was floored when she emailed her thorough report to me the very next day.**

**Chapters and statewide affiliates donated 42 twenty-five dollar door prizes for the convention. Some were combined into fifty dollar prizes, and I was the lucky winner of one of those on the final drawing.**

**Paul Spenser's "Voting Matters" presentation highlighted the difficulties we will face during this November's election. All eligible voters will receive a ballot in the**

**mail. You can get help filling it out and mailing it in, but you lose your privacy. Remote voting by mail presents several challenges including downloading, filling out, printing, signing, and finally mailing in the ballot. Voting at a polling place requires social distancing, which is not easy for us blind folks. To avoid crowds, vote early. If voting by mail, post your ballot early. If you have trouble signing up for remote voting by mail, contact Disability Rights California at 888-569-7955. Noel Runyan has studied voting for years, and has expressed many of these same concerns.**

**For me the highlight of Friday night's general session was the speech**

given by outgoing president Judy Wilkinson. Her delivery was flawless, and her retrospective was candid. She encouraged us to be kind to one another, as we are all CCB volunteers.

In previous years, award winners received plaques. Starting this year, they will receive an email with an attached certificate that can be printed and framed if desired. The ACB Capitol chapter won the Chapter of the Year Award. The Legislator of the Year Award was presented to Assembly Member Tom Lackey, for his outstanding work in sponsoring legislation to enhance laws protecting service animal owners whose dogs are attacked

by pet owners. One Merit Award went to Vivian Younger, who I've known since elementary school. Bonnie Rennie, immediate past president of the California Library Users of America, was given the Distinguished Service Award. A Humanitarian Award went to my long-time friend Ellie Lee, for her outstanding work as a TVI and O&M teacher in the San Francisco Unified School District. She is a leader in the San Francisco chapter and in other agencies serving the blind. She serves with humility and grace.

The final Humanitarian Award winner was Lisa Thomas, CCB treasurer, whom I've known since she was in preschool. She is an indispensable

member of the Fresno chapter, and her service as treasurer is exemplary and beyond the call of duty.

The convention ended with a reading of the chapters who donated to

CCB. Total chapter donations were \$2,180. Several individuals also made generous donations.

I think future conventions will be a combination of in-person and virtual attendees.

\* \* \*

## **Summaries of 2020 CCB Convention Resolutions**

**Submitted by Linda Porelle**

The Resolutions Committee co-chairs, Sarah Harris and Jeff Thom, presented the committee report. Three resolutions had received a do pass from the committee. After some discussion, all three resolutions were passed. For more information, email Sarah Harris at:

[crazyblindlady@gmail.com](mailto:crazyblindlady@gmail.com).

### **Resolution 2020-01**

Advocating for the need for expanded availability of additional funding sources for specialized non-vocational services for persons with vision loss.

### **Resolution 2020-02**

Ensuring the safety and usability of

conference and convention facilities by people with vision disabilities and having accompanying hearing loss.

### **Resolution 2020-03**

Addressing the need for increased availability of accessible prescription bottles. This was withdrawn and the maker

was referred to ACB who is working on this issue.

### **Resolution 2020-04**

Addressing the need for more advocacy and education of the public regarding the issue of fraudulent service animals by CCB in partnership with Golden State Guide Dog Handlers, Inc.

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## **Tributes To Bonnie Rennie**

**Submitted by Susan Glass**

**Editor's Note: On Thursday, July 9, 2020, The California Council of the Blind lost an unassuming, yet shining star. Bonnie Rennie, CCB member for the last 44 years, passed away following a brief but brave battle with cancer.**

**She was one of the warmest people I have ever known, and so present that it seemed inconceivable that she would ever die. She was just too alive to do such a thing. To paraphrase one of my favorite poets Seamus Heaney, her**

passing leaves a sudden space that has been emptied into us to keep. And how best to keep it? By remembering her. By celebrating her work, her warmth, and her vitality. Here is how some of her friends in CCB remember her.

### From Judy Wilkinson

I will always think of Bonnie first and foremost as a wonderful writer, that is, when I'm not thinking of her as a tenacious Bulldog!

Recently when reviewing the issues of the Blind Californian with which I was involved either as editor or president, what should I find in my first issue as editor in Summer 2010, but the article "Let's Meet Leena Bandy," in which

Bonnie profiled our then most recent, and youngest, board member.

How fitting that her final article in the BC Winter 2020 issue just weeks before she announced she was fighting cancer, "The Day I Learned It Was Okay To Be Blind" recounted her meeting with Bob Acosta when he came to interview her for a CCB scholarship. What a revelation to meet a blind person who was a teacher and who became her inspiration and a role model. And as such, Bonnie became to many: an inspiration and role model.

I had the privilege of being the main editor of her book *Seniors Facing Vision Loss*, and the plus was the honor and

pleasure of working so closely with Bonnie.

Roll model, mentor, and yes, tenacious bulldog! Once Bonnie got the bit between her teeth: becoming CLUA president when I asked her, promoting the books she'd Mothered, she just kept on us to step up and do the work we were meant to do. How many times at a CLUA board meeting would we hear, "And what else can we do? How else can we promote reading?" And when will we get the CD of *Seniors Facing Vision Loss*?"

Her numerous emails to me during my term as president: to encourage, to suggest, to gently chide: Yep! That Bulldog!

Even now as I work on compiling the special BC

issue for Cathie Skivers, Bonnie's suggested interview questions, again created just weeks before leaving us, will carry us forward.

When blessed with people like Bonnie, we feel compelled not to disappoint them: we feel compelled to carry on, move forward and never give up!

From Linda Porelle

We're writing to share the sad news that Bonnie Rennie passed away peacefully on the afternoon of Thursday July 9. Bonnie was a member of our CCB family for 44 years. She belonged to the Fresno Chapter in her early years with CCB, later moving to the Orange County Chapter. Bonnie served on, and wrote for,

the Publications Committee, and recently served as president of CLUA. She also chaired the Seniors with Vision Loss Committee. Bonnie was a tireless advocate and enthusiastic supporter of many of CCB's outreach efforts.

And yet, none of these achievements fully capture Bonnie's warmth and deep interest in learning about everyone she met. She was a wonderful ambassador for CCB.

#### **From Bob Acosta**

I was honored to be on the CCB Scholarship Committee when Bonnie received her first scholarship from the CCB. She definitely practiced the idea of "pay it

forward." Her passing is a great loss to us all.

#### **From Gene Lozano**

I agree with everything that has been said by others. One thing that stands out in my mind is Bonnie's advocacy work in furthering the awareness of the needs of seniors with vision loss. She has championed the cause for seniors long before others have taken on this issue. We all will miss her.

#### **From Jeff Thom**

"Quiet, but tenacious, intelligent but unassuming, and always kind and considerate. My condolences to Bob who was always by her side and, a real soulmate. The CCB family will miss her!"

**From Robert Went**

I am truly saddened to hear about the loss of Bonnie. Your organization will really miss her leadership and maturity. and I know I will really miss her personally I didn't know her well but when I spent time with her I did enjoy it.

**From Sharleen  
Ornellas**

We have lost another pillar. She will be greatly missed.

**From CCB President  
Gabe Griffith**

Bonnie was truly a wonderful person and one of the rocks of this organization. We will miss you Bonnie.

\* \* \*

**Pursuing Jazz, A Blind Woman's  
Advantage During Exercise**

By the late Bonnie Rennie

**Jazz and exercise?**

How, you might ask, can these two things be related? Read on and all will be revealed. I recently posted this piece on Facebook in honor of Jazz Appreciation Day.

Back in the good old days, when the smooth jazz format used to be readily available on the radio, I used to prefer this mostly instrumental music, to accompany me on my morning stationary bike

rides. My sighted husband and I realized that being a  
seemed to be mystified by blind pedaler probably  
my ability to be contented made this stationary  
by going nowhere and journey quite acceptable.  
seeing nothing on my cycle, and as we know, there is  
and would tease me. One nothing quite like the  
thought leads to another, theater of the mind!

### **Pursuing Jazz**

**Pedal to the metal, holding tight to the bar.**

**I alternate between fast and slow,**

**Though my destiny is not to go far.**

**"Where you riding to?"**

**His teasing intention to razz.**

**"To a good place!"**

**I smile back.**

**"I'm pursuing jazz!"**

**To the Carlsbad Sea Wall,**

**Or the Gaslamp District Downtown.**

**Skirting the vibrant flower fields.**

**In imagination, they bloom all year 'round.**

## **Why not Dana Point Harbor?**

**The Orange Traffic circle, or that silly Great Park.**

**The weather here is always perfect for a glide and a virtual lark!**

**Up close and personal, scenery sails by,**

**Feel the anchor of the road,**

**Sun and breeze to orient,**

**whatever the burden, makes lighter the load.**

**But regardless of the setting, good music must always play.**

**Body aligns with the smooth rhythm,**

**Inspiring energy to press ever forward,**

**As they say.**

**It's all in the journey, not the destination.**

**As the miles rack up, keeping me well.**

**Bright unclouded vistas, only happy sounds,**

**Let in by the image gate,**

**Better than pictures**

**Or even words could ever tell.**

**"You sure you don't mind riding stationary?"**

**I grin,**

**As the tune makes me pick up my pace.**

**When I'm the only one I'm competing with,**

**I always win the race!**

**\* \* \***

## **5 Ways To Avoid An Accessibility Fail**

**Article Link:**

**[www.forbes.com/sites/andrewpulrang/2020/07/31/5-ways-to-avoid-an-accessibility-fail](http://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewpulrang/2020/07/31/5-ways-to-avoid-an-accessibility-fail)**

**Are inaccessible buildings really all that much of a problem, next to some of the other problems disabled people face? No... and yes. For comparison:**

**Only about 19% of people with disabilities in the U. S. have a job.**

**The poverty rate for Americans with disabilities is about double the rate for non-**

**disabled people, and the gap has narrowed only slightly over the last ten years.**

**One-third to one-half of people killed by police in recent years have had some kind of disability.**

**Preliminary data from April 2020 suggested that about 27% of the total deaths from Covid-19 in the U. S. were people with**

**disabilities in long-term congregate care.**

**We don't know yet how many disabled people have died from Covid-19 in part because of discriminatory treatment policies that explicitly disadvantage disabled people. But we know about some specific losses, like Michael Hickson, a Black man with traumatic brain injury who was denied treatment for Covid-19, over the strong objections of his wife.**

**Alongside these and other dire conditions and dangers, not having a complete choice of restaurants or being blocked by steps from shopping in a vintage record store may seem trivial. And in terms of sheer suffering and**

**immediate consequences, maybe they are less important. But lack of complete accessibility affects far more than recreational shopping and dining, and is still one of the key barriers that hold disabled people back in modern American life.**

**To start with, for disabled people inaccessibility is discrimination. This is one of the core insights of the disability rights movement. With disability, it's not enough to want or intend to do right. Your feelings about disabled people aren't much help. You have to do actual things to ensure disabled people have equal access and opportunity. Sometimes, you have to change familiar practices.**

**You may have to do more for a disabled person in order to treat them equally. And you may have to make physical changes to your buildings and facilities in order to ensure your door really is open to disabled people, both literally and figuratively.**

**One isolated instance of poor access may not be that harmful by itself. But restrictions on disabled people's mobility and choices are cumulative. And they infect every part of our lives. The problem isn't not being able to go into one restaurant on one day. It's all of the spaces we've been excluded from purely by their physical design, and by owners and managers who are unwilling or uninterested in fixing the problem. It's**

**never really knowing what will and won't be accessible to your particular type of disability. It's having to revise and re-revise your daily plans at a moment's notice. It's watching the dominoes of your carefully arranged plans and coping techniques topple one after another, triggered by a single step, or a door that's an inch too narrow. It's all of these things happening week after week, month after month, year after year.**

**It's also knowing that compared to all of the life and death problems disabled people face, accessibility is usually much easier to fix, yet so much of it isn't. 30 years after passage of the Americans with**

**Disabilities Act, any person, business, organization, or government department offering services to the public should at least know whether their facilities and programs are accessible—which means knowing exactly how they are and are not accessible.**

**Barriers are bad enough. But most disabled people will tell you that one thing worse than inaccessibility itself is the unique and exquisite torture of being misled or misinformed about accessibility, of expecting accessibility and being assured of it, and then finding it lacking. Let's call it "The Accessibility Fail."**

**The "Accessibility Fail" is even easier to**

**avoid than poor accessibility itself. It is entirely caused by negligence and inattention, often in tandem with genuine, but paper-thin good intentions. You want to be accessible. You're a good person. Your organization is good. And accessibility is good. So, your place and program must be accessible. We're accessible! Aren't we?**

**But are you? Here are five ways to avoid the uniquely painful "Accessibility Fail":**

**1. Don't say your place is accessible when it really isn't.**

- No steps doesn't necessarily mean your place is accessible. There's more to it than that. There's parking,**

**the pathway to your door, mobility inside your facility, and whether your information and activities are accessible to people with a wide spectrum of disabilities.**

- **Knowing what is and isn't accessible is important, because disabled people who ask about it rely on your answer being accurate and complete.**
- **Make a list, or prepare a script to accurately describe what is and isn't accessible. That way you or your employees are always ready to give accurate, practical information on what a disabled person can**

**actually expect, so they can make sensible choices and plans. A good place to start is the ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities.**

**2. Don't provide just enough accessibility to get a disabled person stuck.**

- **If you can get through the door, but not move around inside, it's a problem. And the disabled person won't know exactly what kind of a problem until they are actually in it.**
- **If you can eat and drink, but can't use the restroom, it's a problem. It's humiliating, physically uncomfortable, and it usually becomes a problem only after it's**

too late to do anything about it.

- Being "stuck" in these ways is annoying and exhausting at best. At worst, it can be dangerous.
- If you can start down a path but run into a barrier you can't get around, it's a problem. Imagine using a properly-designed curb ramp to get onto a sidewalk in a wheelchair, only to find later that there's no way to get to the next pathway, because there's no ramp... or worse, because the ramp is built wrong or crumbling. You either have to backtrack to the last ramp and rethink your entire

route, or risking being stuck or injured by forging ahead. There's not a wheelchair user alive who hasn't either tipped over or needed help to get out of a situation caused by partial, incomplete, or poorly-maintained accessibility.

### 3. Don't forget communication access.

- One of the most common problems in disability culture is the lack of true recognition that "disabled" includes people who don't use wheelchairs or mobility aids, and whose disabilities aren't obvious to the causal observer.
- Deaf and hearing impaired people need

options for understanding voice and audio content. In simple interactions, it may be possible to muddle through with lip-reading, written notes, and mutual patience. But for complex legal, financial, or medical matters, Sign Language Interpreting may be required, and service providers in such fields should be ready to provide it in a reasonably timely manner.

- **Blind and visually-impaired people need options for getting any printed information offered to the public. This can include large print, braille, and audio**

**recordings, or reading signs and brief written materials to customers.**

- **Note that both hearing and visually impaired people usually know which accommodations work best for them in different situations, and it's best to just follow their lead whenever possible.**
- **People who are unable to speak will most likely also have their own preferred tools for communication, which mainly call for patience and disciplined listening. Others may use electronic speech devices. Be careful not to dismiss people**

with speech impairments, or rush through serving them because you're uncomfortable.

- **Make a real effort to make your information and procedures cognitive accessible. Cognitive accessibility means making written materials and other forms of communication accessible to people with intellectual disabilities, traumatic brain injuries, learning disabilities, mental illness, and other impairments that can affect how people process information. One of the core elements of cognitive accessibility is writing in "plain language."**

**That doesn't mean making your ideas "simple" or leaving information out. It means writing in a direct, easily-digested way, with fewer specialized terms and less use of abstract metaphors. It's not an easy skill to master. But it's worth your attention, and there may be more resources in the near future as cognitive accessibility becomes a higher priority.**

- **For help with communication accessibility, review the ADA Requirements for Effective Communication**

**4. Don't invest time and money in a cool new**

**website that's not accessible.**

- **In a website, "accessibility" means a couple of different things. The main requirement is that people using adaptive software need to be able to navigate and read your site fully and accurately.**
- **This calls for a number of technical components, most notably a simpler overall structure, with fewer frames, tables, and moving parts. If your website has a lot of automatic motion, sound, graphics, menus, and different sections on the same page, accessibility may be a problem. At the very least it's**

**worth digging deeper to find out if there is a problem.**

- **One of the most important and easy requirements to meet is that graphics must include "alt-text"—that is, a written description of the picture that screen readers can announce to visually-impaired visitors.**
- **Videos and live audio events need to include accurate captions and/or Sign Language Interpreting. It's also a good practice for live presenters to describe themselves for people with visual impairments.**
- **Don't post text as a graphic. For example, if you want to display**

a restaurant menu, type it in. Don't just take a photo of the menu and post it, because screen readers will see it as a picture and not read out the text.

- Finally, stay away from flashing lights, wild color contrasts, and overly fancy fonts. Your site doesn't have to be dull, but too many "bells and whistles" tend to create unanticipated problems for some visitors, like flashing lights that can trigger seizures in people with epilepsy, or sensory overload for some autistic people.
- Whether you hire a web designer or use a

do-it-yourself webpage application, be sure to flesh out carefully whether they truly understand and implement accessible design. As with other areas of accessibility, it's easy to say your web design is accessible when it really isn't. And if at all possible, ask some visually and cognitively impaired people to give you feedback on your site and any changes you make to it, and be prepared to pay them for this valuable help.

- Resource on web accessibility: GSA Section 508 Accessibility.

5. Don't be defensive, procrastinate, or pass the

**buck in response to complaints.**

- **Whoever receives complaints in your organization should be polite, not defensive, and receptive to feedback. Don't try to explain why you're not accessible, and certainly don't try to argue the point.**
- **Next, resolve to actually do something in response to complaints, and follow through. It's been said a thousand times recently, but it's worth repeating. The Americans with Disabilities Act has been around for 30 years. Nobody needs "more time" to comply. Obviously,**

**fixing an accessibility problem is going to take some time. The point is to get on it and don't procrastinate.**

**One more piece of advice: there are consultants to help organizations improve accessibility, but most of what you need to know is available for free on the government's own ADA websites. And you should also check with your nearest Center for Independent Living. They have disabled people who know about accessibility, both as technical experts and from personal experience. Listen to what they have to say and take it seriously.**

**Accessibility fails are avoidable, but it takes**

work. Crossing your  
fingers and hoping

nobody notices won't do  
it.

\* \* \*

## **ADA Celebration**

**By Bernice M. Kandarian**

This year the disability community is celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which was signed into law July 26, 1990, by then President George H. W. Bush.

Radio and TV interviews, and lots of "zoom calls" are happening throughout July, involving our old friends who were around at that time, and the George and Barbara Bush Foundation at Texas A and M University in College Station, Texas is having a major celebration.

One of my fondest memories was the actual signing of the Act on the White House lawn by

President Bush with four persons with disabilities on the platform surrounded by hundreds who had been involved in bringing the ADA to fruition.

Most notably I remember Representative Tony Coelho from California and Senator Tom Harkin from Iowa who had sponsored the ADA in their respective houses of congress. Tony has epilepsy and was barred from becoming a Roman Catholic priest. Tom's brother was deaf. Such amazing congressmen! I knew all four of those on the podium to one degree or another.

**Paul Schroeder and I shared a volunteer reader when Paul was an undergraduate at American University. He went to Ohio, attaining a masters degree before returning to the District of Columbia and becoming the director of Governmental Affairs for the American Council of the Blind, then doing legislative work for the American Foundation for the Blind. Currently, Paul works for AIRA.**

**Justin Dart, known as "Godfather" of the ADA, used a wheelchair as a result of polio. Justin always had on a suit and tie with cowboy boots and cowboy hat with an American flag pin on the headband of the hat. One day when Roger and I were boarding a United Airlines plane, we saw the name Justin Dart in big letters between the door and cockpit. We commented to**

**Justin who said his father was on the board. His mother's maiden name was Walgreen. Her family owned some drug stores. So Justin mentioned he started a business in Japan selling Tupperware which allowed him some financial independence, so he and his wife Yoshiko traveled in all fifty of the United States assessing the need for what became the ADA.**

**When ACB created our life membership, Justin Dart was at that general session calling for someone to take his check, making him the first ACB Life member.**

**Evan Kemp started feeling muscular discomfort at age twelve. He was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy and told he would only survive two more years. Evan continued his education, graduating from the University of Virginia law school. He**

sought employment from thirty-nine law firms but was not accepted. He got a federal government job and was given the accommodation of using the garage elevator, but not the accommodation of parking in the garage, so he had to struggle to walk into the garage to the elevator. One day the garage door came down on him, injuring him badly. Evan sued the federal government successfully.

President Ronald Reagan appointed Evan to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and President George H W Bush appointed him chair of the EEOC.

Evan's condo was three blocks from my apartment

building, and I learned when he would have a party, inviting friends to come and bring more friends, that is how we met.

Reverend Harold Wilke was born without arms. He introduced himself to Roger at a luncheon by way of apologizing in advance should he knee Roger while eating with his feet. Reverend Wilke accepted one of the pens from President Bush, adroitly reaching for it with his foot. His organization, The Healing Community, played a major role in making churches part of the ADA's effectiveness.

These individuals stand out in my memory when someone mentions the ADA.

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# **First Timers Meeting 2020**

**By Maile George**

**The California Council of the Blind "First Timers Meeting" was held virtually via Zoom on the evening of Monday, June 1. After introductions, meeting host, Guillermo Robles warmly welcomed the attendees. Gabe Griffith, Christy Crespin, and Ardis Bazyn kicked off the call with an introduction to the "2020 Vision for the Future" convention program, outlined CCB chapters, special interest affiliates, CCB committees, the publications of CCB, and also explained just a few of the basic differences between the nation's two main blindness organizations: the American Council of the**

**Blind (ACB) and the National Federation of the Blind (NFB). As Ardis explained it, "One of the differences is NFB tends to litigate, and we tend to negotiate."**

**Guillermo continued by reading the CCB Mission statement. He then expanded on some of the Council's most noteworthy accomplishments including how we successfully advocated for and helped to implement the first accessible ATMs, voting accessibility, the white cane law, a guide dog attack laws and a special needs curriculum reform in schools. Attendees were then treated to a history lesson about CCB, ACB and**

**NFB from Mitch Pomerantz. He encouraged those who were interested in learning more to read the book called, "People of Vision: A History of the American Council of the Blind," by James J. Megivern.**

**Vivian Younger enthusiastically covered the benefits of joining CCB, and Joe Smith answered the question, what's in it for me, as he spoke about the personal benefits he gets from being an "at large" member. Says Joe, "My membership keeps me in the loop with what's going on within the blindness arena". Larice Diamond**

**then gave her own heartfelt reasons for choosing to become a member and covered some of the ways a person can join the organization. The panelists answered a few questions from the meeting attendees, and then Guillermo closed with a few final words of thanks to the panelists and to those who attended.**

**Note: I attended my first CCB convention nearly twenty years ago, and my second in 2018, but this was the first time I'd attended one of these meetings. I am glad I finally attended one—it was definitely time well spent!**

**\* \* \***

# **18 Reasons to Keep Epsom Salt in Your Medicine Cabinet!**

**Submitted by Sugar Lopez and distributed on the diabetes-I list**

**Epsom Salt is the little-known mineral that can fix just about anything. Named after the spring in Surrey, England in which it was found, this mineral can be ingested or applied topically. Its chemical name is magnesium sulfate, and this natural remedy offers many health benefits.**

## **Aches and Pains**

**1. Physical stress: Soak in a warm tub and add Epsom salts. When the salt is dissolved in the water, it is readily absorbed through the skin. The magnesium ions can help with stress, as they promote serotonin production and lessen**

**adrenaline impact.**

**Magnesium also helps with the energy cell production, reducing restlessness and anxiety.**

**Sugar says, "I personally love the lavender version of it."**

**2. Pain and cramping: A long soak can also offer relief for pained muscles and inflamed joints. The therapeutic salt bath also works at soothing abdominal cramps, tension headaches, and tired feet.**

**3. Constipation: When ingested, Epsom salts also moonlight as a saline laxative. You can drink a cup of warm water with two**

tablespoons of Epsom salt dissolved in it to sooth constipation. However, it is not recommended that you use this remedy more than once per day and it's best to consult your doctor if symptoms persist.

### **Medical Purposes**

#### **4. Clean arteries:**

Epsom salts boost the health of your arteries by decreasing inflammation and protecting your arteries' elasticity. This can help improve your circulation and ward off cardiovascular illness, with less risk of clots, plaque buildup, and arterial wall damage. To reap the benefits, soak in a bath of Epsom salts three to four times a week.

**5. Blood sugar regulator:** Both the magnesium and sulfate in

Epsom salts help the body produce and use insulin better. With regular oral or transdermal Epsom salt intake, your blood sugar can be better regulated, resulting in improved daily energy levels and a lowered risk for diabetes.

(Sugar's note" please consult your doctor before trying something new.)

#### **6. Nerve function:**

Epsom salts facilitate many enzymatic functions. Their positive effects on the body include regulating fluid retention in cells and using calcium to transmit chemical signals in the nervous system.

### **First Aid**

**8. Splinters:** Loosen a splinter by soaking the inflicted body part in warm water with Epsom salts. The

mineral acts as an anti-inflammatory around the wound and will soften the splinter, allowing for easy removal.

**9. Sprains and bruises:** Adding two cups of the salt to a warm bath can help alleviate inflammation and pain caused by sprains and bruises. Soak in the tub and the pain will soon be lessened.

### **Beauty Routine**

**10. Exfoliate the skin:** Take a handful of the salt and rub it gently over damp skin, to remove dead skin cells. Your skin will be left looking healthier and feeling soft. This method is suitable for your hands, feet and any other skin areas that need exfoliating.

**11. Face cleanser:** Add a teaspoon of Epsom salts

to your regular cleanser or make your own clarifying treatment with this recipe:

a. Chop a ripe tomato finely and mix it with a pureed egg white.

b. Add to this half a teaspoon of vitamin B5 powder, 1 teaspoon aloe vera gel, 1 teaspoon of Epsom salts and a few drops of thyme essential oil.

c. Apply the mixture to your face and leave it on for 15 minutes.

d. Rinse it off with lukewarm water.

**12. Loosen blackheads:** You can use the salts to remove oil and dead skin cells from your pores. Exfoliate to remove any dead skin from around the blackheads. In half a cup of hot water, mix a teaspoon

of Epsom salts with four drops of iodine, stirring until the salts are completely dissolved. Let the mixture cool down a bit and then massage it onto the blackheads. Let the treatment dry completely and then wash your face with warm water, patting dry with a cloth.

**13. Hair product buildup:** Remove any excess hairspray or other styling products from your hair by mixing 1 cup of Epsom salt and 1 cup lemon juice into a gallon of water (3.8 liters). Let this solution sit for 24 hours before you start using it. Pour the concoction over your hair. Leave it in for 20 minutes and then wash and condition your hair after.

## **Around the House**

**14. Household handwash:** As an alternative to store-bought hand cleaners, mix Epsom salts with baby oil for soft and clean hands. Store in bottles and stash them next to the sinks in your home.

**15. Gardening helper:** You can use Epsom salts to help your garden grow. You can use it to fertilize plants and grass, facilitate plants' nutrient absorption, prevent leaf curling, remove insects or stop a slug infestation.

**16. Clean pots and pans:** To treat really dirty dishes pour some Epsom salt into the water as it helps grime come off easier. The salt's abrasive texture helps loosen the food without leaving your pots and pans damaged.

**17. Tile and grout cleaner:** For an effective tile and grout dirt remover, mix equal parts Epsom salts and liquid dish detergent together. Scrub dirty or stained surfaces with this, allowing the mix to soak in for 2 minutes. The grime is loosened effortlessly. Rinse clean after.

**18. Remove detergent buildup:** Unwanted gunk

builds up on the inside of your washing machine over time. Remove detergent buildup with Epsom salts to protect your washer and see it running efficiently. Run an empty cycle with hot water, a quart of white vinegar and a cup of Epsom salt. After a minute, stop the cycle and let the solution soak for an hour.

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## **Feeling Overwhelmed**

{This was distributed by Ardis Bazyn on the CCB mailing lists.}

Wow! There is a lot going on right now, and it's easy to start to feel overwhelmed. The Coronavirus-19 pandemic and the social isolation/uncertainty related to it, recent fires, threat of earthquakes, social justice

protests and riots, election news, the impending heat wave across the state, and MORE is impacting all of us. You may feel anxious, stressed, worried, sad, bored, depressed, lonely or frustrated in these circumstances.

To make sure that you have all of the resources available to you to help you deal with recent events, here is a helpful list.

## Resources

Call 911 if you or the person you are helping is in immediate danger.

**24-hour Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255 or text to 838255**

**24-hour Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233 or log onto [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org) and click "Chat Now."**

**Disaster Distress Helpline: Call 800-985-5990 (TTY 800-846-8517) or text TalkWithUs to 66746 for 24/7 support.**

**Crisis Counseling Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 for 24/7 crisis support via text messaging.**

**California Suicide & Crisis Hotlines: Find phone numbers and links to all the suicide and crisis hotlines by county in California: [www.sprc.org/states/california](http://www.sprc.org/states/california)**

**CalHOPE Peer-Run Warm Line: Call 833-317-HOPE (4673) Monday – Friday from 7 am to 11 PM for COVID-19 specific non-emergency support. [calhope.dhcs.ca.gov](http://calhope.dhcs.ca.gov)**

**California Warm Peer Line: Call 855-845-7415 for 24/7 for non-emergency support to talk to a peer counselor with lived experience.**

**COVID-19 hotline: 833-422-4255 M-F 8 AM-8 PM, Sa-Su 8 AM-5 PM.**

**Teen line. Teens helping teens:**

**Call 310-855-4673, text "TEEN" to 839863**

**teenlineonline.org**

**Find your local independent living center:  
[www.calsilc.ca.gov/independent-locator](http://www.calsilc.ca.gov/independent-locator)**

## **Hot Weather**

**With most of the state expecting higher than normal temperatures over the next week, remember that if you must be outdoors in hot weather, take steps to stay cool and healthy.**

**Cut down on exercise and other hard tasks.**

**Drink two to four glasses of cool, non-alcoholic fluids every hour.**

**Rest often in shady areas.**

**Wear light clothing and protect yourself from the**

**sun with a wide brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher).**

**To learn more, call 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) or visit:**

**[www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat\\_guide.html](http://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat_guide.html)**

## **Wildfires**

**Wildfire smoke can irritate your lungs, cause inflammation, affect your immune system, and make you more prone to lung infections, including SARS-CoV-2, the virus that cause COVID-19. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, preparing for wildfires might be a little different this year. Know how wildfire smoke can affect you and your loved ones during the COVID-19 pandemic, and what you can do to protect yourselves. Visit**

[https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/covid-19/wildfire\\_smoke\\_covid-19.html](https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/covid-19/wildfire_smoke_covid-19.html)

## **COVID-19**

**Stay safe and be well!  
Find a COVID-19 testing site near you:**

[www.arcgis.com/apps/Nearby/index.html?appid=43118dc0d5d348d8ab20a81967a15401](http://www.arcgis.com/apps/Nearby/index.html?appid=43118dc0d5d348d8ab20a81967a15401)

### ***What to Expect from a Contact Tracing Call***

[mymedicare@subscriptions.cms.hhs.gov](mailto:mymedicare@subscriptions.cms.hhs.gov)

**If you've been exposed to someone who has COVID-19, you may get a call from a contact tracer.**

### ***What to Know about Contact Tracing***

**If you've been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-**

**19, you may be contacted by a contact tracer or public health worker from your state or local health department in an effort to help slow the spread of the disease. Here's what to know if you get a call:**

**A contact tracer may call to let you know you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. All information you share with a contact tracer, like who you've been in contact with and your recent whereabouts, is confidential.**

**You may be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days. This means staying home, monitoring your health, and maintaining social distance from others at all times.**

**You may be asked to monitor your health and watch for symptoms of**

**COVID-19. Notify your doctor if you develop symptoms, and seek medical care if your symptoms worsen or become severe.**

### **Contact Tracing**

**Be aware of scammers pretending to be COVID-19**

**contact tracers. Legitimate contact tracers will never ask for your Medicare Number or financial information. If someone calls and asks for personal information, like your Medicare Number, hang up and report it to us at 800-MEDICARE.**

**\* \* \***

## **California Council of the Blind Officers and Directors**

**As Of August 15, 2020**

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**Sarah Harris**

**Lynne Nishihara**

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**\* \* \***

## **Donations**

**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.**