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In accepting material for THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN, priority will be given to articles concerning the activities and policies of the California Council of the Blind and to the experiences and concerns of people who are blind or have low vision. Recommended length is 900 words, 1800 max.

The deadline to submit material for the fall 2021 issue of THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN is noon, August 15, 2021.

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

Shop at Amazon, donate to CCB. Access 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.

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Editor's Corner

By Mike Keithley

Welcome to the summer, 2021 Blind Californian. Long time, no you. But now that it's summer, you've got all this time on your hands, right. Just the thing to read this mag, just for you!

Three writers, (Margie Donovan, Susan Glass, and Cody Meyer) contributed to this year's Convention Delegate Report. We hope you enjoy reading it.

One of the pre-convention events was a CCB writer's workshop, designed by Susan Glass to help people write, hopefully for the BC. The

stories "No Cane Do" and "Leaving Fenway" are direct results of this workshop.

Alice Turner, President of Golden State Guide Dogs Handlers Inc, tells us about her life's journey with low vision. She puts on another hat to describe the mission of the Governmental Affairs Committee.

And Daveed Mandell tells us about that legendary New York, (ah, New York) insanity.

And there's more! I'll shut up so you can read, read, read!

* * *

How CCB Navigates The Legislative Process

By Alice Turner, Ardis Bazyn, Stephanie Watts, and Regina Brink

The winds and waves are always on the side of the best navigators. — Edward Gibbon, English historian

One recent lesson we all learned is that virtual communication due to Covid and shelter in place will probably be a part of our future. As the world begins to reopen, we will all be navigating the balance between virtual and in-person communication. This is certainly true for the legislative process and CCB.

The Governmental Affairs Committee and CCB members are working together to navigate these waters. We know the world is reopening and this applies to the ever-changing, yet consistent waterways of the legislative process.

Every great crew knows it takes coordinated team work to achieve results, and with the turbulent, and ever-changing aspects of legislation and advocacy, it requires communication, knowledge, flexibility, all

moving forward in the same direction — to improve the lives of blind and low vision individuals in California and in the USA.

Jeff Thom, CCB Director of Governmental Affairs, mentioned at a recent Governmental Affairs Committee meeting that CCB is the strongest, and most visible organization working through legislation and advocacy to improve the lives of blind and low vision individuals in California. Through his leadership, we are not only effective, but also well-known and respected for our work.

So you may ask, how does CCB navigate these waters?

Let's picture a wheel, and we will use this wheel as an analogy to highlight the collective works of CCB.

The Hub

The hub of the wheel is the center and focus for our actions. It includes the examination of legislative and regulatory issues of concern to CCB. We determine CCB positions that we will advocate such as state legislative proposals, subjects of resolutions adopted by the membership or action taken by the Board of Directors. Now, more than ever, it requires careful collaboration with like-minded organizations who will work with us to support our issues related to our members and other disability groups. We are

learning that careful selection of these partnerships help us to power through the turbulent waters of State and Federal legislation. CCB is fortunate to have knowledgeable members who have years of experience on issues of importance to us, including Jeff Thom, Gene Lazano, Steve Mendelsohn and many more throughout our long CCB history.

Now, let's consider the other parts of the wheel. The hub is only as strong as the spokes, connecting parts to keep us moving forward. Picture the parts of the wheel as they relate to these skills and traits.

Coordination and Communication

Alice Turner and Ardis Bazyn, Co-chairs of the CCB Governmental Affairs (GA) Committee, are charged with leading the team forward as initiatives are decided by resolution, the Board, or actions concerning the blindness community. Alice and Ardis plan Capital Days, assist with planning CCB's participation in the ACB Leadership Seminar, and keep members informed of issues needing member support. It takes all CCB members calling and writing letters to really make a difference in the outcome of legislation and change.

Advise and Mentor

Governmental Affairs Committee members are critical to help Jeff Thom discern what is important to CCB. They advise others about the issues progressing through the legislative process, and they serve as leaders for chapter and affiliate legislative liaisons. GA members lead the way for Capital Days and the ACB Legislative Seminar. Members of the GA Committee are a well-balanced crew with a great deal of knowledge and experience. GA member Robert Wente writes: "Much of the work of the committee takes months or even years to accomplish. It takes a special type of person to be involved with long-term

efforts. In the end we are often surprised by our own efforts in achieving new legislative initiatives for blind and low vision citizens of California."

Developing Talent

Governmental Affairs Deputy Directors Regina Brink and Stephanie Watts work directly with Jeff Thom, and they assist him in going to hearings, taking actions and attending calls important to CCB. Both Regina and Stephanie are taking specific issues that are important to CCB members, and every crew needs "Rising Stars." Regina writes: "Navigating the legislative process was different when I tried my hand at it in the past. I belonged to an organization of concerned

parents who were all sighted. We also weren't sure what we were doing and got ourselves into deep, treacherous waters a couple of times. A few legislative aides familiar with the process took pity on us and sent rescue boats to get us back on track. This time I have had able guidance and navigation experience with able captains like Jeff, Ardis, and Alice. I feel this experience has been much more effective, and I am learning how to help others navigate the legislative process together."

Stephanie states: "As a new Deputy Director (appointed July 2020), I have had to make sure my contributions turn mostly in the direction of the

wheel. Navigating is tricky when you don't know the process and those involved in it. Fortunately, as a new member of the GA team, navigating my way through the legislative process was made smooth by a wheel with excellent tread. All on the GA Committee welcomed me and, under Jeff's leadership, training was provided during Fall 2020."

Inform and Advocate

Legislative Liaisons, along with Chapter and Affiliate Presidents, monitor the information sent out by Governmental Affairs and keep members informed. More importantly, this crew brings forth issues of concern, and they participate in Capital Days

and legislative seminars. We currently have 34 Legislative Liaisons. As Steve Mendelsohn stated at a recent meeting, "Advocacy and suggestions for legislative action surface from our many cause-driven affiliates and local chapters."

Organize and Support

Gabe Griffith, CCB President, along with Nicole Pacheco, CCB Operations Manager, work together to send letters for CCB related to Governmental Affairs, provide critical information for our Capital Days and keep track of our historical documentation. Gabe stated, "Nicole is essential to the work of CCB and her support in

our letters and documentation supports achieving our mission."

By the time you read this article, CCB will be well underway with our Virtual Capital Days. At your next chapter or affiliate meeting, check in with your legislative liaison to learn about their experiences and successes. We are all in this together, — navigating as best we can for the California blind and low vision community.

CCB Governmental Affairs Committee Members

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Ardis Bazyn, Co-Chair

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**Jeff Thom, Director
Governmental Affairs**

**Regina Brink, Deputy
Director Governmental
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**Stephanie Watts, Deputy
Director Governmental
Affairs**

**Andy Baracco, Margie
Donovan, Chris Fendrick,
Gabe Griffith, Steven
Mendelsohn, Dirk Neyhart,
Joshua Saunders, Robert
Wendt**

*** * ***

Why Using Cleaner Energy Helps Protect California's Natural Resources And Vulnerable Populations

By Gabe Griffith

**Editor's Note: The
following editorial
appeared in the San
Leandro Times on May 14,
2021.**

**As the president of
the California Council of
the Blind, every day I am
working with our chapters**

**across the state to bring
awareness to 'Time-of-
Use' TOU energy plans. It
is a priority because we
know the potential impact
now and, in the years to
come.**

**I encourage every
Californian to take**

advantage of renewable energy resources, such as wind and solar — a more readily available resource during the day. By shifting our collective energy use away from peak hours (4:00-9:00pm*), we can better align our usage to when cleaner energy is more accessible.

CCB's mission is to increase the

independence, security, equality of opportunity, and quality of life for all Californians who are blind and visually impaired. By adopting 'TOU' best practices we can all make strides towards a cleaner, more accessible tomorrow.

**- Gabe Griffith, CCB
President**

* * *

In Three Voices: CCB Convention Delegate Report

**By Susan Glass, SVCB Alternate
Delegate, Margie Donovan, GSGDHI
Delegate, and Cody A Meyer, GSGDHI
Alternate Delegate**

A Sampling of Pre- Convention Activities (Susan Glass)

Pre-convention activities began on March 30 with zoom training sessions for anyone who needed them, and ran throughout the month of April.

On April 12 at 7 PM, I attended the virtual meeting of CCB's Governmental Affairs Committee. Regina Brink shared information about

Assembly Bill 392 which officially became law in January 2020. Part of this bill requires that Peace Officers and Victims Assistance professionals receive training and guidelines to follow when working with people with disabilities. To understand the need for this training, consider the following scenarios:

* A police officer mistakes a white cane for a weapon.

*** A blind or visually impaired person does not see the police officer, and therefore fails to respond to commands.**

*** A hearing impaired person does not hear the officer and fails to respond.**

*** A Victims Assistant fails to recognize that someone with whom they are working is blind, especially if that someone is a victim of a crime, has just gone through the harrowing experience, and is too scared or flustered to have a calm discussion about visual impairment.**

Regina encouraged members of CCB chapters to educate themselves about police and Victims Assistance training in their local communities, and learn what specific

training is being provided as well as who is providing it. We as blind and visually impaired individuals may want to be training consultants.

We next discussed ACB's legislative seminar and this year's legislative imperatives. Jeff Thom shared plans in the making for CCB's statewide, virtual legislative capitol week which will happen beginning Monday June 7. CCB members will schedule virtual appointments with their district assembly persons and senators to discuss several imperatives. One of these is a bill that's co-sponsored by Guide Dogs for the Blind and Canine Companions for Independent Living which

seeks to prevent the sale of fraudulent service animal certificates. We are also continuing to work on a statute involving prescription drug labeling.

On Sunday, April 18, I attended the pre-convention business meeting and program of Golden State Guide Dog Handlers Inc. We elected new officers, and my yellow lab guide Omni and I are now the incoming presidential team for this affiliate. We are fortunate to have Alice Turner's dynamic leadership legacy to follow, but I agree with Omni that we have big paw prints to fill. Our program speaker was Todd Jurek, Field Service Manager at Guide Dogs for the Blind. Mr. Jurek gave an interactive presentation

called Integrating Our Guide Dogs Into Our Families: The Good, The Bad, And The Ugly. He shared tips, techniques, and strategies that we can use with our families, friends, and coworkers when the novelty of our guide dog's presence wears off, and real life sets in. We tackled problems such as handling people who feed our dogs when we've asked them not to, who interfere with or criticize our work with our dogs, or who ask us to leave our dogs at home when we obviously need them with us. Guide dog handling is a lifestyle choice after all, not an activity to be dabbled in one day and whimsically discarded the next. Several of us had sent our

questions and concerns to Todd in advance of the workshop which made the discussion run smoothly.

At the request of CCB's Publications Committee, I facilitated a writing workshop on Monday, April 19 for any and all CCB members wishing to write for the Blind Californian, but perhaps uncertain about where to start. I'm not sure, but I think we have more than 30 people on that call, and we had a blast! We discussed the booby traps that can prevent us from writing, such as Internal Editor Police who scream that we're no good at writing or have nothing worthwhile to say. We listed the many BC articles we'd never have had the pleasure to

read if their authors had listened to the internal nay-sayers. Then we completed and shared a number of writing prompts. Here's a sampling:

A. The first time in my life when I truly understood that I was blind.

B. Things I enjoy most about the community where I currently live.

C. Challenges and barriers to my being fully independent in my community.

D. My favorite teacher.

E. My funniest ever cooking fiasco.

F. My scariest mobility challenge.

G. What would my cane or guide dog say about me if it could talk?

We discussed ways of rounding out and extending these starter prompts into articles. I guarantee that you'll read at least three of them in this issue of the BC. We are planning additional writing workshops to work together on BC articles in progress.

Convention Report Part 1.

(Margie Donovan)

Thursday Evening Session One

After the Roll Call of Affiliates and adoption of the CCB Convention Rules, a recording of long-term member Al Gil going to the convention on Greyhound was played.

Many of us thoroughly enjoyed it, with sound effects and all.

CCB History Remembering Our Past, to Build Our Future

Many CCB members participated in an interview of their history in the CCB. In the early 80s, NFBC and ACBC both existed in California. The NFBC was a stand-alone affiliate—we had no association with NFB nor ACB. NFBC and the NFB engaged in legal action; CCB was the name of the NFB's state affiliate. When all was settled, the NFBC got the CCB name and the NFBC money. At this juncture, CCB became an affiliate of ACB. We had two state affiliates, CCB and the ACBC. Shortly thereafter, both

organizations merged to become the CCB. This left California with only one organization.

Many of the interviewees talked about this period of time in our history. Some spoke about when ACB and NFB parted ways. For details on the history, please read **PEOPLE OF VISION: A History of the American Council of the Blind** by James J. and Marjorie L. Megivern which can be found on BARD. All panelists spoke of their individual experiences and fond memories of the organized blind movement.

Following the history presentation, was the Credentials Committee report, and the Nominating Committee report

presented by Frank Welte, chair of both. This was followed by the first reading of recommended bylaw changes.

Friday Morning Workshops

Advocacy Workshop #1

Your Voice Counts!

Self-Advocacy Basics

Sarah Harris, Fresno, CA

Steven Mendelson, San Leandro, CA

Steven talked about system advocacy. This is much of what CCB does to change laws and policies. We often engage in structured negotiations and some legal action. Our resolutions process is a perfect example of how CCB works to make systematic changes.

Sarah shared about advocating for herself as a blind parent. She met with her daughter's teachers to discuss how to communicate homework assignments so that she might help her daughter. She would also let the teacher know where she can best sit to see things, and how she takes tests. Sarah wanted to be a parent chaperon on field trips, but the school would not allow her due to being blind. After much advocating, they allowed her to accompany the class on a field trip. Through this opportunity, she was able to demonstrate how she kept track of the children she was responsible for. Fortunately, after this trip her blindness was no

longer an issue for her being a parent escort.

Sarah also spoke of her experiences with Project Athena, whose mission is to help survivors of medical and/or traumatic challenges reach new athletic goals and achieve their adventurous dreams. She wanted to do a 26 mile walk with them, but they were very concerned about how to accommodate her since she is blind. She spoke about her education and advocacy work with Project Athena, and eventually she was able to walk the 26 miles with them. During the walk, she had people describing their surroundings to her. Several other participants became very engaged and

excited about describing things to her. Through Sarah's work, education, and advocacy with Project Athena, they have become more inclusive to people with disabilities.

Advocacy Workshop #2

Make a Difference

Systems Change Advocacy Basics

Ardis Bazyn, Burbank, CA

**Alice Turner, Sunnyvale,
CA**

Sarah Harris, Fresno, CA

In addition to the three aforementioned ladies, there were additional panelists which included Sharlene, Andrea and Jaqueline. Overall, this presentation continued on from Workshop One. There were more specific

details and examples provided in this workshop.

One panelist talked about being visually impaired and black. She spoke about how she was being passed over for promotions due to her disability. She took it upon herself to begin educating her colleagues and superiors about her vision loss. Eventually this led to her getting a promotion and people became more familiar with her abilities.

Another speaker spoke about purchasing a computer. She was concerned about purchasing the right system so that it could accommodate her access software. She did not want to purchase the wrong one and take it home only to find out she could not

install her access software and be charged a restocking fee upon returning it. She took her old computer to the store with her and demonstrated her access software for the employees. This resulted in her being able to purchase the right computer. For the sake of brevity, I'll only describe these two of the many examples presented during this workshop. The main take away is to be your own self-advocate.

There were exhibitors and sponsors which were interspersed throughout the convention. All of these were prerecorded. There will be a list of sponsors and exhibitors at the end of this report.

On-the-Muv was live and reported on the

convention specials for the treadmill machines. Steve Bower had been using the treadmill during the previous presentation. He spoke of how surprised he was that he was actually breaking out in a sweat. He said at first he was not convinced he would get much cardio out of the machine, but he did.

Friday Afternoon Session Two

Legal Update

Rachel Weisberg

Attorney and Employment Rights Help Line Manager, Chicago, IL

Rachel works for a protection and advocacy agency; similar to Disability Rights California (DRC). Rachel gave an overview of Title I, II, and III of the ADA. Title I of the

ADA prohibits private employers, State and local governments from discriminating against people with disabilities. Title II of the ADA protects qualified people with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of disability in services, programs and activities provided by State and local government entities. Title III focuses on private businesses. Rachel reviewed cases, including the well-known Winn-Dixie Inc. grocery store case. Juan Carlos Gil ("Gil") sued Winn-Dixie Inc. as their website is not accessible. The Court for the Southern District of Florida found in his favor, but Winn-Dixie Inc. appealed it to the U.S.

Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. The appeal resulted in overturning the lower court's decision; they ruled that websites are not considered "places of public accommodation." They stated that the store's website did not constitute an intangible barrier to the customer's ability to access and enjoy the physical grocery store. Rachel also mentioned two ADA cases brought forth by Amazon employees. The employees alleged that the Amazon website for employees is not accessible. Amazon is working on their software to make it accessible. Irving vs. Uber: Miss Irving sued Uber over guide dog discrimination. Despite the

NFB settlement with Uber, they failed to modify their policies to train drivers. This case settled for 1.1 Million dollars and Irving received over three thousand dollars while the remainder of the settlement went to legal fees.

Untapped Asset: Racial and Ethnic Diversity in CCB

Inclusive Diversity of California

The IDC discussed how the California population has changed. Data was presented on the various ethnic minority groups. One speaker noted that she wants to be seen for who she is as a woman, not her blindness nor her ethnicity. This speaker also spoke about being referred to as a

"jap" instead of Japanese. The IDC offers ongoing educational opportunities which are announced in the Happenings.

Let's Get Moving!

Calisthenics with Leslie Spooone, Winter Park, Florida

Leslie Spooone, First Lady of ACB, had all conventioners stand up and do exercises for about ten minutes. Leslie used to own a gym and she teaches fitness classes at her home now. She is also a Pilates instructor.

Conflict and Collaboration: Blind Services vs. Cross-Disability Services

A number of agencies for the blind and independent living centers (ILCs) discussed

collaborating to best serve blind clients. In Fresno, Suzanna Gamez (Executive Director, Resources for Independence Central) and Shellena Heber (Executive Director, Valley Center for the Blind) spoke about their ongoing collaboration to serve blind clients. Both of these programs work together to maximize services for clients. It is becoming important for ILCs to offer services for the blind. Under the OIB funding, many ILCs receive grants to provide services to blind clients. There are many more ILCs throughout California than there are agencies for the blind.

Friday Evening Session Three

Remembrances

Many CCB members made mention of people who have passed away in the last year. Some such members include, Manuel Urena, Elmer Chapson, Bonnie Renny, Dr. Seley Marchi, Lily Humphrey, Jewel Waymouth, Tamara Kearney, and Susan Henry-Branden.

President's Report

**Gabe Griffith, CCB
President, Concord CA**

President Gabe spoke about stepping back from the CCB for a few years while his wife Becky was so ill. Unfortunately, she eventually passed on. Shortly following her passing, Gabe faced his own health challenges,

causing him to spend a month and a half in the hospital. Once his health was stable, he became active again in the CCB. Gabe noted that it takes every member of the CCB to do the much-needed work on behalf of us as blind people. He has been able to attend about half of the CCB chapters via Zoom. It is his hope to meet with the rest of the CCB chapters in the coming year. Gabe mentioned that he served in most positions on the CCB Board prior to being elected president. Early in his tenure with the CCB he decided that one day he wanted to be president.

Gabe gave accolades to Nicole (CCB office manager), the TOG, and the CCB Board. He spoke

of mentorship in the CCB and how important it is. He specifically thanked Jeff Thom for mentoring him for many years.

In closing, Gabe stated that someone with severe hearing loss will be part of the site selection committee for selecting convention hotels.

Governmental Affairs Report

Jeff Thom, Sacramento CA

Jeff Thom acknowledged Regina Brink and Stephanie Wats for their advocacy on SSP and SSI. He also acknowledged their hard work for better health care. Brink went on to talk about the four imperatives we had for the ACB Legislative Seminar. Wats provided statistics on the

number of appointments we were able to get, how many people from California participated, and more. She specifically noted that more training needs to be provided to new participants on scheduling of appointments. She specifically noted this was a particular challenge for her being a first-year participant. While much time is dedicated to learning about the imperatives, very little training is given on scheduling appointments. In closing, she stated a fair number of appointments were not able to be made as some of the teams assigned to congressional representatives did not live in their districts.

In California, the Digital Access Project aims to help those who do not have the digital literacy skills they need to succeed and help them understand the relevance the Internet has in their lives. They offer low-cost internet as well. For more information, look up digitalaccessproject.org or call (800) 390-2699.

AB468 is sponsored by GDB and CCI. CCB and GSGDHI are supporting this bill as well. This bill would make it illegal in California for entities to sell over the internet service dog equipment, vests, and tags. It would also require physicians to have had a relationship with a patient for at least thirty days prior to "prescribing" a service

animal. The intent of this bill is to minimize the fraudulent presentation of a dog as service animal.

AB361 would require scooter rental businesses to put braille and tactile markings on each scooter so that a blind pedestrian can read it and report it to the company. Many such scooters are left in the middle of sidewalks lying down, and blind people are tripping over them and getting hurt. This bill would also require scooter companies to carry insurance that would cover pedestrians who are injured by a scooter. Recently, an insurance company was identified that would provide such insurance. Even though the scooter companies are fighting this bill, it is

making its way through the capitol. This bill now has more teeth since that insurance provider has been identified.

It was mentioned that Medi-Cal has open enrollment year-round. Example, if you are on a Medicaid managed care program and choose to switch to straight Medi-Cal, this can be done at any time.

Elections

The slate of nominees from the nominating committee were all elected. Warren Cushman ran unsuccessfully against Nellie Emerson.

Saturday Convention Sessions

(Cody A Meyer)

***Saturday April 24 —
Sunday April 25th***

Fourth Session

**Rob Turner Second Vice-
President Presiding**

9:00 am Welcome

**9:05 am American Council
of the Blind Update**

**Clark Rachfal, Director
of Advocacy and
Governmental Affairs.
Alexandria, Virginia.**

**He gives us an update
on what has been going
on in regards to disability
to transportation act.
"DATA". H.R. 1697
disability access to
transportation act would
help improve paratransit
services and programs for
transit riders. The bill was**

**introduced in the 116
congress and also
includes the house of
surface transportation
legislation in July of 2020.
ACB applaud
representatives Jim
Langevin and Dina Titus
for their efforts in
reintroducing DATA as
H.R. 1697. This bill would
allow a pilot program to
take place in allowing
passengers with a
disability on paratransit
one stop for child care
drop off and or a stop at
an ATM. The next thing he
updated us on was
Medicare and low vision
aids where as Medicare
will not cover
magnification devices or
glasses, customers have
to pay out of pocket for
those devices. Many
consumer groups, vision**

professional and manufactures have been discussing in a conjoined effort to roll back and resend the Medicare exclusion that happened in 2008.

Exercise and Fitness for all Act: The access board is developing standards and guidelines for gyms/fitness centers in providing accessible fitness equipment and exercise classes to people with disabilities, this also includes having one employee able to help individuals access the accessible equipment and its use.

Access to vote independently: Having the equipment and software so persons with a disability can vote independently without the

help of a trusted friend, **Help America Vote Act "HAVA"** sets standards for voting machines and there must be one at each polling place. The machines allow persons to vote independently and must be able to verify the vote.

9:40 am Artificial Intelligence: How it is Enhancing Our Everyday Lives

CCB Technology Committee

In this presentation we learned how artificial intelligence is helping us in multiple ways already.

Nick, the director from Bookshare, discusses how AI is helping with math.

Math OCR full page scanning. Math OCR does

descriptions of access to math. Bookshare sends it out.

What is coming to Bookshare? Nick shared that Bookshare is in the process of creating a web reader he hopes that this will roll out sometime in the new school year.

Rob has a description of MathML. Jaws tells you when you are at the beginning of the equation and the end of the equation each time.

John Gassman talks to us about Picture Smart and how it can be used.

The picture goes up to the cloud then it describes the photo. Picture Smart also can describe some famous people with varying success.

Larry Gassman gave us a description from Gun Smoke that Picture Smart did a good job of describing.

Andrea shared an app with us "HW buddy" You can find it on the app store.

10:30 am Domestic Violence: It's Not Just Physical

Shari Roeseler, Director of Society for the Blind Sacramento and Beth Hassett, CEO WEAVE Sacramento, CA

Defining Domestic violence. Shari Roseler shared with us that there are six forms of Domestic violence

- **Physical**
- **Sexual**
- **Emotional**

- **Spiritual**
- **Technological**
- **Verbal**

Shari went through the list above and defined what they were and then also talked about having a plan to get out of a challenging situation where it could be difficult to leave or not wanting to leave because you are worried about the repercussions that might happen, etc. Shari also covered what WEAVE provides in regards to services and how the Society for the Blind have collaborated to curve this issue. The staff at WEAVE have gone through an extensive background check and training on how to handle challenging situations. There were some great questions

asked by participants and lots I learned as well.

WEAVE Contact information: Support line (916)-920-2952

Business line: (916)-448-2321

11:15 am Midday

Mindfulness

Lead by Linda Porelle.

Fifth Session

1:00 pm Welcome

1:05 pm Pedestrian Control over Drivers' Yielding

The Rev. Dr. Gene Bourquin, COMS, New York, NY and Chiang Mai, Thailand

Driver's yielding: Dr. Bourquin shared with us many different studies that have been conducted in how you can affect the response in how drivers

yield when crossing streets. Dr. Bourquin shared the many different variables that affect drivers in any situation. He discussed how we as pedestrians and the techniques we use can greatly improve the safety/ability to cross streets at the optimum time and which techniques work at that crossing etc. There was lots of information in this presentation and would take up a whole page. The main points to take away are:

- **Cross at lighted intersections**
- **Make yourself as visible as possible**
- **Conduct an intersection analysis**

Lastly, he covered roundabouts and how they are generally not safe to cross especially at the exits of roundabouts because cars are traveling faster when exiting.

2:15 pm You Have a Story to Tell

**Kelly Brakenhoff, Author,
Lincoln, Nebraska**

Kelly Brakenhoff told us a little about her background as an ASL interpreter and how that lead her to pursue a childhood dream about becoming a mystery and children's book author. She asked us to write down "If you could write about anything what would it be?" there were some great responses from participants with some great ideas they would put in their book.

The over arching presentation was on how anyone could get into writing and how much fun it could be, she also mentioned when first writing it does not have to be long, it could be short stories or writing a certain number of words a day.

Lastly she mentioned a writing challenge in November called National Novel Writing Month where you write 50,000 words between Nov. 1st and 30th.

Final Notes

(Susan Glass)

I absolutely have to tell you about Saturday evening's banquet entertainment! If you have never heard ACB musician Jason Castinguay perform, you've missed an

outstanding experience. Jason is a superb jazz vocalist, pianist, harpist and showman with a talent for presenting themed concerts. His theme for our banquet was travel, in hopes that as the Covid curtain lifts, we can all hit the road. He gave us tunes like "Route 66," "Come Fly with Me," and so many more. You can hear Jason's radio show on the ACB radio channel ACB Cafe every Tuesday afternoon from 2 to 4 PM Pacific Time. The show is called Art Felt. You can also purchase his CD's at jcast77@gmail.com or at jasoncasinguay.com or musiccalmomentswithjason.com.

The Sunday morning convention session was dedicated to convention

minutes, treasurers report, and voting on resolutions. A full resolutions report will appear in the BC, but here is a sampling:

Resolution 2021-1. Mandatory Disability Training for Healthcare Workers on and For Consumers with Disabilities. The resolution passed.

Resolution 2021-2. Called the Translation Project, this resolution directs CCB Publications Committee to explore the feasibility, costs, and consumer demand for translation of CCB media into multiple languages

beginning with Spanish, and to submit a proposal to the CCB Board of Directors concerning this project by December of 2021. The resolution passed.

Resolution 2021-9 is called Equity In Law Enforcement Training Standards, and was mentioned briefly earlier in this report.

I think we had a total of 13 resolutions, most of which passed, but I will leave it to the legislative experts in CCB to give you the full skinny in the fall Blind CALIFORNIAN.

* * *

Just Like Flowers

By Regina Brink

History is the soil where our lives were planted and
stirred,
Germinating while we pretended to be seen and not heard
So we could draw life quietly
In the midst of wars and hatred and inhumanity.
Faith became the root of our will to live
And the hearts remaining ready to forgive,
Knowing the stem must bring healing
And draw sustenance from compassion and feeling.
Hope blossoms with the fragrance of love
While a bright sun of new life shines above,
Warming cold hearts with the knowledge of equality
And embracing the beauty of diversity.
Like flowers, springing from a similar root,
We vibrate with colors that dazzle and uplift and
transmute.
Like flowers, we can change the world a little at a time

By being open and welcoming... inclusive... and intentional... and kind.

*** * ***

CCB Scholarship Recipients 2020-2021

By Christy Crespín, CCB Scholarship Committee Chair

Once again, this year CCB's Scholarship Committee had the pleasure of interviewing and granting scholarships to fourteen students. Listed below are the scholarship recipients and their fields of study. We commend them on their success and encourage them to complete their goals, and to become and remain members of the California Council of the Blind.

Angela Andrews: From Long Beach, Angela's career goal is nursing, and she is working toward an associate degree in biological science, eventually transferring for a Bachelor of Science in nursing with a minor in public health.

Taylor Bantle: From Carlsbad, Taylor is a sophomore, currently attending San Diego State University, majoring in television and film,

pursuing a career in sound design.

Jovany Barba: From Hawthorne, Jovany attended his senior year at UCLA, graduating with a bachelor's degree in sociology.

Silvia Blanco: From Pomona, Silvia will graduate with her Master of Social Work degree from CSU, San Bernardino, and is looking forward to working in the field of social work.

Rostom Dadian: From Glendale, Rostom is pursuing his bachelor's degree in finance with a goal of obtaining a master's degree in business administration with an option in finance.

Lorise (Rise) Diamond: From San

Diego, Rise is completing her master's degree in writing and rhetoric from San Diego State University and has been accepted into a doctoral program.

Megan Downing: From Santa Barbara, Meghan has completed her freshman year at Berklee's College of Music, in Boston, MA, studying music therapy and guitar.

Nathan (Nate) Gelbach: Residing in Mill Valley, Nate is a fourth-year student at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, studying business administration with an emphasis on finance.

Adrian Hermosillo: residing in Yucaipa, Adrian is completing his senior year at CSU, San Bernardino, graduating with a bachelor's degree in

marketing. He is hoping to enroll into a master's program.

Jaime (Jimmy) Hernandez: From San Diego, Jimmy is studying at Ringling College of Art and Design in Sarasota, FL, majoring in motion design and animation, with a goal of becoming an animator for Disney.

Sean Landgraf: From Long Beach, Sean is majoring in Japanese with a minor in translation studies at CSU, Long Beach. He hopes to study abroad in Japan next year.

Tuan Nguyen: Residing in Sacramento, Tuan is attending CSU, Sacramento, obtaining his master's degree in biochemistry.

Teresita Rios: Originally born in Mexico, Teresita moved with her family to the U.S. to Semi Valley, at age 11. She has just completed her first year at Notre Dame Law School in Indiana, obtaining her Juris Prudence (law) degree. Teresita has the distinct honor of receiving the very first Rhonda King Memorial Scholarship from the ACB Capital Chapter. This scholarship is bestowed on students studying in the fields of law, political science, and related fields. Rhonda King was quite active in CCB and appreciated law and advocacy.

Genan Suleiman: From Oakland, Genan has completed her first year at UC Berkeley with an

intended major of environmental engineering.

Thank you to all who applied for scholarships. We deeply appreciate their hard work and diligence.

We thank our generous benefactors for their benevolence toward the California Council of the Blind and deserving students.

Each year the Active Blind, Inc. has graciously donated to the CCB Scholarship Fund on behalf of a bequest from Anthony (Tony) G. Manino, who was CCB president and dedicated himself to the blindness movement.

A first-time donor, we thank the California Community Foundation (CCF) for a most generous

donation. Without this donation we could not have offered such generous awards to so many students.

Without the hard work and diligence of our CCB Scholarship Committee members, we could not have accomplished this wonderful work. Thank you, Guillermo Robles, for such a wonderful CCB Awards video. Thank you, Robert Wendt, Rob Turner, and Guillermo Robles, for work on the CCB Scholarship application. Thank you to Andrea (Andi) Thom and Leslie Thom for a fun CCB Scholarship reception. Thank you to the following Scholarship Committee members for being such a wonderful and cohesive committee:

Nelly Emerson

Jessica Marquez

Linda Porelle

Guillermo Robles

Leslie Thom

Rob Turner

Robert Wendt.

If you are a full-time student, legally blind

according to the Social Security definition, with permanent residence in California, please consider applying to the California Council of the Blind for a scholarship. For more information, please contact ccbscholarships@gmail.com.

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Leaving Fenway: My Scariest Lesson

By Olivia Ostergaard

I joined Susan Glass's recent BC Writers Workshop, and she gave us three writing prompts. One was this question, "What is the scariest mobility experience you've had?" Here's mine.

About every week or so, I'd walk around the corner for lunch to a little

Mexican restaurant called La Fonda De Ophelia. Since I'm a Mexican cuisine aficionado, I compare other such establishments to theirs. They bought the place from Rusty, whose Don Jose's I'd frequented with Fumi, my first guide dog. Sadly, they closed right

when the pandemic began. It broke my heart, since Blanca and Jose knew me and my current guide Fenway. I'd opt for their traditional chicken Taco/Cheese Enchilada offering, which before receiving their sacrifice, I'd stuff myself with half of their chips and salsa. Oh, I can still taste them in my mouth! Yum!

The route was pretty basic. Out the door to the porch steps, right slightly to the sidewalk. I'd turn right, cross down to Wilson, turn left at Wilson and Shields, cross, and walk to the light at Palm. Then, I'd cross Shields, over two driveways, turn at two o'clock through the parking lot, and boom! I'm there. No big, right?

Well, on this day, I'd just finished, paid my bill, and proceeded to walk out the door, cross the parking lot, head for the sidewalk, and turn left toward the light on Shields. Next door to this enclave was a car repair place. Sometimes their driveway would confuse and frighten me. A planter with some shrubbery to my left hemmed me in between a behemoth light pole, and a fire hydrant. It could be tricky maneuvering through. If it were pretty warm, I'd leave Fenway, my guide home, grab my trusty cane, and scope it out solo. So that's what I did on this fateful day, and I was feeling confident.

I found myself veering to the right, figuring I'd

make the light. Tapping along, I listened for the traffic. Fortunately there wasn't much at that time. So I thought I was okay. Suddenly I heard a car honking its horn. I stopped to listen, thinking that its driver was signaling me to cross the street. To my horror, I soon heard a car door slam, footsteps, and a man's voice, saying calmly, "Did you know that you're in the middle of the street?"

I gasped, "On Palm? I asked."

"Yes, let's go this way," as he took my free elbow, leading me toward the sidewalk. I told him that a blind person doesn't know what "this" or "that" means, and that we prefer directions like

"north," "south," "east," and "west." He asked me if I knew where I was going. I pointed toward the light on Shields, and said I'd be okay. But, inside, I was a mess.

Fumbling all over myself, I assured him that I'd effortlessly walked this route dozens of times without incident. I informed him that I'd left my guide dog home, because it was too warm. My humiliation was apparent, and I thanked him profusely. Upon reaching the sidewalk, I began shaking, praying all the way as I crossed Shields at the light. I couldn't figure out what I'd done wrong. I stopped in front of the "Basque & Robins", turned left, and stormed to Wilson, turning

right, to the corner on Simpson. I crossed Wilson, walked two houses to mine. Whew! I'd made it!

Unlocking the door, I stepped into my house. Fenway was right there, giving me loves. I grabbed his face, kissed him, and said, "Baby, Mommy sure needed you today. I was confused, and almost got in trouble. But this nice man helped me."

Fenway licked my face, and I sat down in my recliner, still shaking.

"Thank You, God, that man saw me. I don't know what happened. How'd I miss the crosswalk? I won't leave Fenny ever again. Thank You. A-a-men!"

The following week, I had Fenway in tow, and boy, did I feel safer. I truly don't know how I gotten confused about the crosswalk. I guess it happens to the best of us. Even now, since his retirement, Fenny watches me like a hawk. He usually walks to my left with my hubby, Jim. Looping my left arm in Jim's right arm, I'm pretty secure, as I use my cane in my right hand. If we get separated Fenny will look back to see if I'm coming toward them. He'll wag his tail and smile, assuring me the pack's all right, and off we go!

We never know how valuable our guides are until a blunder like the one that I made wakes us up. I learned that the hard way.

I hope you never have to

learn it.

* * *

Tribute To Elmer Chapson

**By Julie Winters from the SVCB In Touch
Newsletter, April 2021**

Editor's Note: It is with profound sadness that we learned of the recent passing of long time SVCB chapter member Elmer Chapson on March 15 of this year. Here is a lovely tribute to Elmer written by his friend and care giver of many years, Julie Winters.

ELMER! It has been a pleasure to have been a part of your life!

I was drawn to Elmer's wicked sense of humor and positive attitude of life right from the start. He told wonderful stories of the people in his life,

introducing me to his blind community--the most amazing, resilient, competent and positive group of people I've ever met. My life has been enriched knowing Elmer.

I first met Elmer in the mid 1980's walking a troop of dogs up our street as I was driving down the hill. I just lived around the corner. He'd walk his dog Barkey and all of Barkey's friends who hung around Elmer's house. Those were the days when people weren't so uptight about their dogs getting

into trouble. I always remembered his name because I had an Uncle Elmer and for the fact that we both loved dogs. Dog people are joined at the heart.

Throughout the years we would run into each other, I would identify myself and we would exchange pleasantries. Barkey passed away and Elmer had another lovely dog, Greta. Greta was an institution in our neighborhood. She chose to sleep on the warm pavement in the middle of the street and people would either, drive around her or, like me, would wake her and take her up to the porch and knock on the door. Then in early 2007, I saw Elmer walking toward town without

Greta. I stopped to say "hello" and told Elmer I hadn't seen Greta in a while and asked if she was all right. He said she was fine and I asked him how he got her to the veterinarian. He said they used to walk to her appointments but that she was not able to walk that far any more. So I gave him my phone number and told him if he needed to get her to the vet or needed anything, I'd be happy to help. He called the next day worried that Greta's food might have been recalled, something he'd heard on the news, and asked if I had a computer to look up the lot numbers. The rest is history.

In 2008, Elmer helped me buy a new car. We

went together to look at a Toyota Prius. I ordered one through Santa Rosa Toyota. The day came when it was delivered but we had to pick it up in Santa Rosa. Elmer said he'd get us up there, after all, he knew the bay area transportation system like the back of his hand. He ordered an Outreach car to CalTrain. CalTrain arrived at Fourth Street San Francisco. We walked over to a corner where a bus took us up to the old main bus terminal and from there another bus which took us over the Golden Gate to Santa Rosa with only one stop. Was I impressed? We drove home in a new car and he became co-pilot.

Throughout the following years our

adventures took us to Florida twice, a drive across the U.S., and a visit to his birthplace. In Florida he loved the warmth, where he said for the first time he walked in the ocean with bare feet. We took off our socks and shoes and strolled in the surf. A neighbor caught some Mahi and we made fish sandwiches. A good time was had by all. We were visiting my mother, June. Elmer knew June after meeting her on one of her trips west to visit me. Mom was a couple of years older than Elmer so they always had things to talk about.

In 2009, I drove to Florida to visit Mom and see friends then I drove up the east coast to New Jersey to see more

friends. At the end of my visit I picked Elmer up at JFK airport and we drove to Cape Cod, then through Vermont to Montreal. Elmer wanted to visit the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. We then started the drive home traveling on Interstate 70 to Colorado then drove all the way south to Pagosa Springs, Elmer's birthplace. A friend of Elmer's, Keith Marshall, had visited the history museum in Pagosa Springs prior and had reported to Elmer that he had found information on Elmer's family. We arrived in Pagosa late in the afternoon but before closing. Perfect! The docent showed Elmer photos and articles and information where his

mother was buried. Elmer's mother died when he was just two years of age. We visited her grave site on Cemetery Hill the next morning. We then went to the city building and pulled maps to find where he had lived according to the information we gleaned the day before. Following the maps, we drove to the site where his family had a ranch and stood on the ground where he, most probably, was born. It was a beautiful town and I think it brought him a little peace.

Other trips closer to home included taking the train to Sacramento and visiting Natalie and Jackie and many other friends for lunches and get togethers. Sometimes we would visit

the east bay to see Josie for lunch. Day trips north to wine country or south to Big Sur always took us to a destination restaurant. The Miramar in Half Moon Bay or Napenthe's (Na pen thay's) in Big Sur were his favorites. A drive along the coast on Sunday listening to Sunday Jazz on the radio was also high on the list. Sometimes it was a drive along Skyline Boulevard in the Santa Cruz Mountains, first with a stop for an early breakfast at Alice's Restaurant. It was just fun to get in the car and go.

We "saved" dogs together and twice found turtles in the street—go figure. Can't count how many dogs we found in dangerous situations and

into the car they went and then over to Elmer's house. Once there he would plie them with water and food until we could find their people. If I found a dog at night while driving, I would go by his house and wake him up to ask if the dog hotel was open. It always was. He loved having a dog in the house. Twice we found turtles in the street and took them over to Vasona Lake to let them go. For the last year and a half of Elmer's life, he had a live-in caregiver named Jodelle. It was a good fit as Jodelle had a very sweet Corgi named Kailani and Elmer loved having them both. They brought a lot of joy to him.

Elmer became my family. We spent each

holiday meal together and he seemed to like my cooking, especially when I baked pies—apricot, blackberry and apple. He did not like pumpkin. The last pie was a lemon meringue which he chose for Christmas 2020. I loved cooking for him, as he had a large appetite right until the end.

I wanted to mention very special neighbors, Arlene and John Rocchio. Arlene was a Registered Nurse and had taken care of Lois, Elmer's wife when she was ill. Their friendship goes way back and they always kept an eye on Elmer. He looked forward to their Friday lunches and he loved them dearly. John and Arlene were staunch supporters of Elmer and

me. I reported Elmer's health issues to Arlene for guidance and we received great support. It was always a team effort to meet Elmer's needs. It was so comforting to know they were there.

Elmer was an extraordinary man with an extraordinary life. He was also a fortunate man. He loved his life's work, his wife Lois, his home and his friends. He woke up happy and went to bed happy. When you asked him how he was, he would say "Just Great," even when it wasn't so great. He loved life, and I believe he loved HIS life. He would always say "life is good."

So, of course, there is so much more to the story. So Elmer, to you I say, "Great adventures, good

food, good wine, good
times with friends—Salud!
You were so loved and it

was my pleasure to have
been your friend and just a
part of your life.

* * *

New York City Insanity

By Daveed Mandell

What did I know? San Francisco was a sleepy little hamlet, compared to the noisy chaos of rush hour in the subway station on Continental Avenue in Forest Hills, Queens. But my years in Israel had prepared me well. I could push and shove with the best of them, and this day I did it with gusto.

The New York subway's local track was broken at Grant Avenue. So the R train had to travel on the express track to Roosevelt Avenue. From there, it switched back to

its original, local, state to pass through Queens on its way into the City.

"Stop pushing!" "You can't fit!" "What do you think we are, cattle?" "Stay off the train!" "Cut it out!" Those were the cheerful greetings that wafted through the subway car over the buzz and din of the motor.

"You're holding things up!" "You see, the conductor can't close the doors, with you trying to get your hand in!" "There ain't enough room for your

body!" "I have to get to work!" "Just wait!" "There's more than one train, ya know!..." On and on and on went the cacophonous harangues.

Well, I wasn't that upset. I could yell and curse, too. And my acid tongue was nicely sharpened for the occasion. So, this was New York, the cultural center of these United States.

My train finally reached 59th Street and Lexington Avenue in midtown Manhattan, near the New York Lighthouse for the Blind, and—shoving people and objects out of my way—I made it out of the train, into the frantic hustle-and-bustle of the station. I walked up interminable

flights of stairs, finally reaching the outside world. Millions of people were running crazily hither and thither to various office buildings, stopping on the way to buy coffee.

No, this was not California! True, now and then, people called out to each other, "Have a nice day!" But that token expression of cordiality was short-lived. More often than not, it was usually followed by sotto voce epithets, such as "The jerk!" Ah, Manhattan!

The traffic boomed in my ears as I crossed Lexington Avenue. Hubbub reigned. I loved it all.

California was so tame! But California was also my home. I would come back to New York for

many visits in the coming years. Living here, though, was just out of the question. Pandemonium was fine for a while, but I liked the laid-back atmosphere of the Golden State. Holding that

thought, I dove into the rush-hour traffic, and became quickly engulfed in the Manhattan madness that swallowed up the throngs of people around me.

* * *

Journey With Low Vision: Milestones, Memories And Music

By Alice Turner

Recently, Rob and I spent a wonderful weekend with a couple who live in Half Moon Bay, and Mary and Helmut have been our one and only "pod" friends during shelter in place this past year. It has been a gift and a sanctuary to visit. We laugh and cook together and smell the flowers, as Mary has a seascape of a

garden in her back yard. One evening, sitting around the table after dinner, the conversation went to past memories and thinking of the music we listened to at that time. We all remembered times when our mutual parents did the same around their respective tables, and now I know the meaning behind those memories.

Simply put, as we move through our own decades in life, reflection is a good thing to do, especially with friends after a great day and meal. The next morning as I was sitting in her garden alone, I started thinking of our chat the night before and what the decades have meant to me for my journey with vision loss. Since we discussed music at the dinner table, I thought I would write about music and milestones.

Late 1950's and 60's
Beatles, Beach Boys,
Stevie Wonder and
boy bands to sing
along with friends

I have never been one who hides my age, and yet when Rob set up a new email at Comcast as alicem1957, I lamented,

now everyone will know what year I was born! In his calm manner, he replied So? I agreed, it is a great reminder about enjoying each day and not focusing on birth years.

I was born with congenital glaucoma, and my mom was a nurse. She noticed some of the signs even when I was a very small child living in Rhode Island. We were eventually referred to a remarkable ophthalmologist, Dr. Harold Scheie, Chair of the Department of Ophthalmology at the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania. This meant traveling by Amtrack to New York to my mom's family, spending the weekend and then taking the train to University of

Penn. I avidly read Archie comic books and played tic tac toe with either my mom or dad, whomever was charged with my visit. Dr. Scheie always marked our chart with "no Charge," and it was only later that I learned that his fees were quite low for his time, and he did not charge people with limited incomes, police, teachers, other doctors and fire personnel. He offered the same for those who were wealthy and suggested they donate to the Medical Center. He was way ahead of his time, as the Pugh family was the major donor for building the world renown Shei Institute, still operating in Philadelphia.

I knew none of this then. However it did begin

a journey of surgeries as a child, hospital visits and pediatric floors are still strong memories, and my favorite memory was bouncing on the beds with my child roommates the night before surgery under the watchful and agreeing eyes of the nurses, as they knew we were not going to feel so well the next day after surgery.

Many train visits every six months, and when my Dad passed away in 1964, it was Mom and me, with my three brothers and one sister holding down the fort in RI.

School was sitting in the front row, then faking it so I could be with friends, then going back to needing to see the board again. One of my older brothers, John, who is 3

years older, was my guardian who was always there in the background making sure his little sister did not get picked on.

**Gratitude to Mom,
Dad, Siblings and Dr.
Scheie**

**1970's Music: Carol
King, James Taylor,
Simon and Garfunkel,
Talking Heads, Elton
John and everything
Motown**

No matter what year you were born, the decade from age 13 to 22, is long and formative. For me that included graduating from a small Catholic grammar school, electing to travel to a private high school across Narragansett Bay, St. Mary's Academy, as I intuitively knew that I could not handle the local

high school. There was a huge baby boom, and our high school was going to double sessions to accommodate the kids until the second school was finished. I actually worked at our local Parish to pay for the tuition, which is a whole other funny story.

My graduating class was less than 300, and the nuns were cool and very aware of social justice. I learned how to get comfortable in my own skin and joined every possible "crowd" so I could find what I enjoyed, including drama, yearbook, and although I never joined a basketball or volleyball team, I learned I could play certain sports. The classes were small, and

the mix of lay teachers and nuns were open, and they helped me become more comfortable with my vision loss. I could still read print and everything close was no problem, it was distance that was an issue. I eventually learned how to advocate for myself, even after hitting those inevitable bumps in the road, emotional bumps, not physical yet.

I was also matched with a counselor from the Rhode Island Commission of the Blind. Our family was very much into the "medical model" of save the vision, and I did get a full ride for the college I chose, Rhode Island College, including dorm fees; however I really had no clue of the benefits and options for those services.

Studying Elementary/ Special Ed at Rhode Island College and living on campus for the first two years was a good launch pad for living independently.

Gratitude: Teachers, friends, roommates and family

1980's Music: Police, Michael Jackson, U2, Fleetwood Mac, Bruce Springsteen, Prince, Paul Simon and Dance Music

"Go West," and I did! An East Coast friend, Lori, was working in retail in Carmel, and another dear friend of mine, Phyllis, and I traveled to visit there in 1981. I was offered a job to work with Lori's Manager at Carmel Plaza, and I never worked retail in my life. All of my jobs required

a whistle around my neck for working with kids. It was a great reason to move cross-country, and Carmel was another soft landing. My last visit with Dr. Shei occurred right before I left, this time traveling to Philadelphia; on my own in a plane on my own dime. It was poignant saying goodbye to this amazing man who was such an important part of my life, yet I was ready. He made the proper referrals to doctors in SF, and we embraced as I left the Shei Eye Institute.

Eventually after a year in Carmel, I moved to SF, and my career and continued education at SF State to study for a Master's in Education in Instructional Design began. My career in

Human resources and Training and Development began. I found my place in the corporate world.

Surgeries began again in the late 80's and early 90's, and I often told my SF Ophthalmology team that Dr. Shei had great warranties on my childhood surgeries. Lori moved back to the East Coast, and I stayed in SF, best decision for me, and the SF Bay Area was my adopted home.

Gratitude: SF Friends who became family, beauty of SF Bay area and mentors at work

**1990's to 2010 Music:
Hootie and the
Blowfish, various
female vocalists, Eric
Clapton, Black Eyed
Peas, and so much
more**

Funny thing about congenital glaucoma is that at some point, the maintenance for saving the vision is a bit relentless. The rate of progression is much quicker, and it was in the late 90's that I was referred to what was then known as Peninsula Center for the Blind, when I was working as the Training and Development Manager for See's Candies, Inc. I learned cane skills and what I now know as blindness skills. It also was the first time I met a blind person who was

about my age, Lynda Johnson, who was working then as a Counselor and a leader of a support group. Living on my own in a great small apartment in downtown Burlingame opened the world of public transportation, and I stayed working at See's for more than eight years, including getting matched with my first guide dog, Kato.

I moved to San Mateo, started working for what is known now as Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. My office mate, Steve Nakagawa, who has since passed away, would tell me "Get rid of the mouse!" and eventually I did and moved from magnification to screen reading.

I also attended my first CCB Silicon Valley Chapter meeting as a speaker to talk about Vista Center Services and the Braille Challenge. In the middle of a talk that I had done many times by that point, I started crying, as it occurred to me I was in a room with people who would become my friends, and they happened to be blind or low vision. I became a Chapter member on the spot. Rob Turner was Vice President of the Chapter at that point, and eventually we met again as we both worked in Palo Alto.

I attended my first CCB Conference in Fresno and I was hooked! I met so many bright, funny, talented, helpful people and I now had the bigger picture of CCB.

Gratitude: Friends and family who were by my side as I navigated the ups and downs of vision loss, community of blind and low vision friends, work colleagues and CCB

**2010 to Present
Music: Anything I
want to listen to
using Amazon and
CD collection**

Just like music, we all may take different paths and choices with vision loss. I have learned from my husband and loved ones who are congenitally blind how their lives differed from mine, and at

work I have the opportunity when I am in the office to meet with parents who have children with early-stage vision loss for a number of reasons. Our low vision ophthalmologist Dr. Selma Chin, who has worked with us for many decades, often asks parents if they would like to speak with me and for the child to meet my guide dog. I tell a short story about the benefits of braille and other skills that I learned early will help no matter what the vision loss may turn out to be.

Learning, advocating, traveling and figuring out life and pursuing all of the interests in my life is a joy and a blessing. I am truly grateful to every turn in that path and every person and group that was there to meet and walk alongside me. Just as our choices in music may differ, how we navigate this path is individual, and yet it is influenced by our families, peers and loved ones.

Gratitude: Rob Turner and my friends and family

* * *

Learning To Live Alone

By LoraLee Castner

When people ask me, "What have you learned in the past year from Covid?" I answer, "I have learned to live alone."

For most of my life, I shared a dwelling either with family or with an abundance of room mates initially at the School for the Blind, later at college and finally in a mobile home. At the age of thirty, I married Mike and we spent 42 years together, first in a small apartment and later in our own condo. But without warning, Mike's cognitive abilities changed and he had to move into a residential memory care

facility. All at once, I was living alone with only a cat for company.

This change proved particularly difficult during a time when Covid ran rampant and confined me to a lonely home. So, needing to adjust to a new way of life, I purchased a smaller bed and filled my bedroom with chairs, a vanity table, figurines and stuffed animals.

More recently, I disposed of older items such as a valet chair I gave Mike for Christmas the year before we were married, a stationery bike he used to ride an hour a

day, and volumes of outdated braille material that he had insisted we keep.

And several days ago, I shifted some light jackets and sweaters from a crowded rack to an empty area in his closet. Moving that outerwear enabled me to reach another step in the acceptance that Mike will not be coming home, not in a few months, not ever.

As well as making changes in my living area, I built a routine by getting up the same time each day and by exercising daily and twice a week on Zoom. Being somewhat of an introvert, I do not spend hours on social media or Zoom, but do attend Sunday worship with my church, monthly

meetings with Bay View, my local CCB chapter, and a connect call weekly with chapter members. I join these calls without Mike beside me and braille only one church bulletin each Sunday.

I set the alarm for the same time each morning and no longer get up early on Saturdays so that Mike could shop at the local market, bring our favorite burritos back for breakfast and share news about cashiers and clerks who assisted him with choosing groceries as we unpack the bags together. Now, I shop on the Safeway website every few weeks and purchase fewer treats. Unpacking bags of produce is no longer fun, but a chore.

I miss the routine of cooking dinner each day and having Mike keep me company while I try a new recipe, or stir ingredients together for a familiar dish. Rather than eating a haphazard meal alone, I now join my good friend Lynn and her husband for dinner and conversation.

For a number of mornings, I faced the frequent complications of navigating numerous bureaucracies: being transferred from office to office at the HMO where we are members, obtaining medical records from diverse facilities, and completing a claim for benefits from a long term care insurance system. Confronting impersonal phone menus and receiving partial and "We'll

get back to you" answers caused stress and coping with stress without Mike's calm presence compounded this tension.

Without help from Lynn I do not know how I would have completed the required mountain of paperwork for the long term insurance claim. I scanned much of the correspondence I receive regarding medical and legal matters, but many responses contained complex tables, and not all of the necessary documents were in electronic format. When paper work seemed insurmountable, I felt grateful that Mike remained unaware of the time and effort involved to secure his future.

Being alone at home for hours each day, I learned to express gratitude for and delight in ordinary events. Now, I value simple activities whether I'm knitting a shawl, reading a book, sitting in the sunshine, listening to music, proofreading a book for Bookshare, or hearing my robot vacuum maneuver through rooms. I treasure my cat leaping uninvited into my lap, or her joining me on the bed the second she hears the wake-up alarm.

I rely more than ever before on texts or emails from friends, and on check-in phone calls from acquaintances or family members.

As months pass, I receive fewer phone calls

and emails and time extends between texts from close and casual friends. I understand the reasons behind contacts becoming less frequent; after all, life goes on, no significant news takes place and Mike will not get better. So, to combat loneliness, I must pick up the phone, call casual acquaintances I hope will become friends and renew contact with some individuals who I have neglected during this time of isolation and transition. After all, especially for now, and possibly for the foreseeable future, many of us are alone.

Soon the county where I live will begin to open its doors, and then I must combat a different experience of loneliness.

For now, I am trying to suppress thoughts of attending church and the followup coffee hour without Mike by my side. Because he is no longer here to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries, I will rarely go out for meals at restaurants but will relish memories of all those past occasions.

I anticipate the sadness of sitting alone at Bay View meetings and other social events. I dread the eventuality of walking by myself into a room noisy with clusters of people already seated at crowded tables and looking for a place to sit. Yet, I must face these

challenges on my own, and despite innate shyness make efforts to speak to individuals I don't know well, and become involved in projects in new ways. Every time I walk through a door alone, I will remind myself that all of us, even while in groups, may occasionally feel lonely.

So as my circumstances have changed, I will change. And while new challenges have come and will continue to come, I must navigate this new environment without Mike beside me but moving ahead, unsure but determined.

* * *

The Birth Of An Advocate

By Regina Brink

I was born fully sighted as far as the doctors could determine. However, I was a very cranky baby who cried inconsolably. They changed my formula and tried all kinds of hot water bottles and soothing music and held me and walked the floor with me. Now we know I had retinal blastoma and malignant tumors were silently forming in my eyes. By the time the adults around me realized what was wrong, the only choice seemed to be surgery to remove them. It worked. I have been cancer free ever since but, of course, since

my eyes are prosthetic, I am totally blind.

I had a field teacher, Mrs. Douglas, who came to my home to work with me on pre-Braille and other blindness skills. Mostly, she worked with my parents to figure out how to raise a blind child. My parents did not know anyone who was blind or even low vision.

The time came for me to go to pre-school. Mrs. Douglas suggested Frances Blend where I would go away for the week to a residential school and then come home on weekends. This was the first time my

mother and Mrs. Douglas passionately disagreed. My mother, because of her very negative experiences in schools as a marginalized American of Mexican descent, refused to send me to a residential school of any kind. She believed I should go to a school with sighted children. She knocked on many doors, but no pre-school programs would accept me.

Finally, one teacher at a school in Lakewood (one city over from Long Beach) said she thought this could work. My mother agreed to stay until the teacher and I were comfortable. She showed the teacher how to integrate me into the pre-school program. I painted like everyone else,

wearing an apron and believing my art was inspired. The same with coloring. My mother showed the teacher how she arranged my crayon box of 8 crayons in a specific order: black, then brown, then red, then purple, then blue, then green, then orange, then yellow. She had already taught me this order went the darkest to the lightest color in the box. (We only had 8 crayons in a box then.) My mother showed me around the classroom and the schoolyard and made sure I knew how to independently find the bathroom and the drinking fountain. She taught me how to find a spot in the circle on the rug and she and the teacher put down clear tape to allow me to

find the circle by touch. Everything seemed to be going well.

At last, the day came when my mother dropped me off and went home like the rest of the parents. I was a big girl, going to school like my older brother without my mother tagging along after me. The class time went by smoothly. I couldn't wait for outdoor time. I loved the playground, the swings and jungle gym, the slide, outdoor toys, and the sandbox.

The time came for us to go outside and that was when the strangest thing happened. When I got outside and went to play with my friends, no one would play with me. They told me to go away. They whispered "Don't play with

her. She's BLIND!" It seemed as though that word "BLIND" was reverberating around the schoolyard just like a scary movie. I began to cry. What was going on? Why were they calling me hateful names? They never said this about me before!

The teacher came out and was very shocked. She brought me inside and gave me a drink of water and asked me to tell her what in the world was wrong. I did.

"But you are blind," she said when I told her the kids were calling me bad names.

The crying started all over again and this time I was serious. I cried for my Mommy. When the teacher explained it was a lot to

ask my mother to drive back since we lived in the next city over, I cried louder. Eventually, the teacher had no choice but to call my mother who anxiously rushed back to the school.

I stopped crying when my mother came and she went by McDonalds and got me a chocolate milk shake, which helped me feel better instantly. (Imagine that! Perhaps this was the beginning of my chocolate addiction, but that's a future article.)

"Why were you crying so hard?" my mother finally asked.

When I told her, she seemed just as puzzled as my teacher.

"But you are blind," she informed me, "Even

though that's no excuse for the other kids to be mean to you."

I stood up to my full 2 and a half feet height. (I've always been very short.)

"I am not BLIND!" I insisted, raising my voice and stamping my foot, not caring about the consequences. "I just can't see!"

It is amazing to me at 3 years old, I already knew blindness was associated with negative stereotypes and I was having none of it. My mother did not argue with me. Instead, she asked me what I was going to do.

I went back to that school and didn't cry and told the kids what I thought of their hateful ways. We made up and the

rest of the school year was much better. The teacher even apologized for not being more

understanding. Perhaps, this is when my passion for advocacy was born.

* * *

No Cane Do!

By Cachet Wells

Is it Christmas or April fools day? Are you serious?

I am so done with you for now. Like that gown that you so absolutely needed for that dinner party. You even took me along as you searched for weeks and weeks on end, trying to find the perfect one.

I just can't believe that you went out the house without me. You made your way down the breezeway and then down

the driveway, and you still had no thought of me. You've loaded yourself onto the Paratransit, buckled yourself in and everything, all the while just chatting with the driver about family, routes and, of course, tonight's dinner menu.

In and out of stores, day in and day out. Down many sidewalks, crosswalks and parking lots. Riding in Uber, Lyft or the good old fashioned "pete and repeat," as my dad would say, walking if

you didn't know. Running and grabbing all the thirty things we don't need as you head out the door. Yet, one of the most important things never hit the floor.

It seems like you pull me out only when you want to. Then you never have me when you need me. Wait a minute, then you have the nerve to have blinged me out with all these shiny rhinestones for everyone to see. And you wave goodbye and say your farewells as I think "What about me?"

Haven't I proven to you that I am here just for you. That I'll stick by your side through all kinds of sunny or stormy weather. I've taken you through small

spaces, dark places, stairways and elevators. Yet you think of me second and not first. How many times will it take? How many falls will you have or bones will you break, before you see the need to take me with you regularly. Stumbles and falls are not my goal for you. It's to stand up with you and walk along with you. That is the number one reason for my being. I am designed to help you to go around every corner, turn and bend. So the next time you are ready to go and you are about to rush out the door, think of me and put me to the test. For it is this white cane with the red tip that's eager to do the rest.

* * *

Board Meeting Minutes

By Linda Porelle

**California Council of
the Blind**

Open Board Meeting

**February 11, 2021,
7:30 PM**

**President Gabe Griffith
called the meeting to order
at 7:31 PM.**

Roll Call

Present:

President, Gabe Griffith

**1st Vice President, Sarah
Harris**

**2nd Vice President, Rob
Turner**

Secretary, Linda Porelle

Treasurer, Lisa Thomas

**Immediate Past President,
Judy Wilkinson**

Directors:

Steve Bauer

Christy Crespin

Nelly Emerson

Larry Gassman

Pam Metz

Guillermo Robles

Jeff Thom

Penny Valdovinos

Frank Welte

Agenda

Call to order: Gabe Griffith

**Roll call and introduction
of guests: Linda Porelle**

**Additions to and adoption
of agenda: Gabe Griffith**

**Minutes, December 2020:
Linda Porelle (Public and
Excutive meetings**

**Treasurer's report: Lisa
Thomas**

**Newel Perry report: Mitch
Pomerantz**

**President's report: Gabe
Griffith**

**Policy: California Council
of the Blind Code of
Conduct: Gabe Griffith**

Member sound off

**Sarah moved and Steve
seconded the motion to
adopt the proposed
meeting agenda. The
motion passed
unanimously.**

**Judy moved and Christy
seconded the motion to
accept the meeting
minutes for both the
December 10th open and
executive Board meetings.**

**The motion passed
unanimously.**

**Linda moved and Penny
seconded the motion to
accept the treasurer's
report. The motion passed
unanimously.**

Summary:

Balance \$66,498,97

payable \$9,465

expected balance

\$57,033,86

2nd EUC installment

\$30,551

MMS 4th quarter \$1,245

**Newel Perry Fund report:
Mitch Pomerantz**

**This report covers the
period October 1 through
December 31, 2020.**

**On September 30, the
balance in the Newel Perry
Endowment Trust was
\$127,384.32.**

On December 31, the balance stood at \$143,372.32, an increase of \$15,988.00, or 12.6% over the preceding three months.

At the close of 2019, the Fund stood at \$124,252.41.

In 2020, the Fund increased \$19,131.91, or 15.4% for the year. Both the overall health of our investments under the stewardship of Morgan-Stanley along with the ability of the Council to find and utilize other revenue sources were significant contributing factors to the aforementioned growth.

In response to questions about the Lily Perry Memorial Fund and Foundation, Frank noted that these funds were established to assist with

education and employment. Their current value is around \$200,000. The foundation is dissolving. President Griffith will appoint a group to oversee the funds, once they are transferred to CCB.

Gabe invited Sarah to present the convention report. She noted that the program has been completed. Some braille and large print copies will be available. We'll have an audio version as well. The versions will be ready by March 1, along with the registration form. We have a couple of sponsors and the print and braille have been generously donated. Sarah also announced some upcoming Zoom classes to more fully

orient convention attendees:

March 30 zoom beginner class and

April 1 advanced class. Check the registration form for more details.

Rob moved and Pam seconded the motion to adopt the revised CCB Code of Conduct policy. The motion passed unanimously.

Summary: Guillermo read the policy for the membership.

Member Sound Off

In response to member inquiries, Lisa will check with ACB to see how many CCB members are contributing to MMS.

Gabe reviewed the ACB legislative imperatives, which include

1. Medicare coverage for low vision aids,

2. Reauthorizing the FAST Act, which focuses on surface transportation issues, and

3. Fitness for everyone, involving legislation supporting availability of accessible exercise equipment.

Christy stated that the scholarship application is coming soon.

The Blind Advisory Committee (BAC) will be meeting on Feb 17.

As chair of the membership committee, Guillermo is accepting chapter of the year nominations by Feb 28.

Frank, awards committee chair, is looking for award nominees by Feb 15.

The meeting adjourned
at about 8:40 PM.

**California Council of
the Blind**

**Open Board Meeting,
March 11, 2021, 7:30
PM**

President Gabe Griffith
called the meeting to order
at 7:35 pm.

Roll Call

Present:

President: Gabe Griffith

**1st Vice President: Sarah
Harris**

Secretary: Linda Porelle

Treasurer: Lisa Thomas

**Immediate Past President:
Judy Wilkinson**

Directors:

Steve Bauer

Christy Crespin

Nelly Emerson

Larry Gassman

Pam Metz

Guillermo Robles

Jeff Thom

Penny Valdovinos

Frank Welte

Absent:

**2nd Vice President: Rob
Turner.**

Agenda

Call to order: Gabe Griffith

**Roll call and introduction
of guests: Linda Porelle**

**Additions to and adoption
of agenda: Gabe Griffith**

**Minutes, February 11 2021:
Linda Porelle**

**Treasurer's report: Lisa
Thomas**

**Board announcements:
Anything Board members
have that may be of
interest to our members.**

Withdrawing of chapter charters: Gabe Griffith

Granting a new chapter charter: Gabe Griffith

Members sound off

Penny moved and Steve seconded adoption of the meeting agenda.

The motion passed unanimously.

Guillermo moved and Nelly seconded acceptance of the February Board meeting minutes.

The motion passed unanimously.

Linda moved and Larry seconded acceptance of the treasurer's report.

The motion passed unanimously.

Summary:

**Current balance:
\$99,478.87**

**Outstanding expenses:
\$9,062.00**

**Ending balance:
\$92,978.25**

The 3rd Energy Upgrade California (EUC) payment of \$30,561.60 was received.

Judy asked for inclusion of year-to-date numbers. Lisa will provide them in her convention report.

Board Announcements

Judy announced that we're now taking orders for Onthemuv. We now have a direct link to their website. The links will be live on our home page soon.

Sarah reminded everyone that the

convention registration deadline is Apr 16 at noon.

Cruise is building an autonomous vehicle and will be a gold sponsor for us at \$5,000. Democracy Live will also be a sponsor. Sarah listed other sponsors as well. Delta Gamma Sorority will facilitate our voting.

Linda reported that the Spring BC is out.

Frank moved and Larry seconded withdrawing the charters of the Greater Lakewood and San Diego chapters. The motion passed unanimously.

Judy noted that the San Diego Chapter may have money. This will be investigated.

Jeff moved and Linda seconded the motion to grant a charter to our

newest affiliate, Inclusive Diversity of California. The motion passed with a majority vote.

Discussion: Regina shared some history regarding the creation of the affiliate. Although several Board members expressed concerns about the choice of the affiliate's name, the majority agreed that this affiliate will provide a much needed new perspective for our work in CCB.

A motion to provide a stipend of \$500 from CCB to IDC was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Because of the lateness of the hour, there was no additional time devoted to member sound off this evening.

The meeting was
adjourned at 9:58 PM.

**California Council of
the Blind**

**Open Board Meeting,
Thursday, April 8,
2021**

President Gabe Griffith
called the meeting to order
at 7:32 pm.

Roll Call

Present:

President: Gabe Griffith

**1st Vice President: Sarah
Harris**

**2nd Vice President: Rob
Turner**

Secretary: Linda Porelle

Treasurer: Lisa Thomas

**Immediate Past President:
Judy Wilkinson**

Directors:

Steve Bauer

Christy Crespin

Nelly Emerson

Larry Gassman

Pam Metz

Jeff Thom

Penny Valdovinos

Frank Welte

Absent:

Guillermo Robles

Meeting Agenda

Call to order: Gabe Griffith

**Roll call and introduction
of guests: Linda Porelle**

**Additions to and adoption
of agenda: Gabe Griffith**

**Minutes March 11, 2021:
Linda Porelle**

**Treasurer's report: Lisa
Thomas**

**Presidents report: Gabe
Griffith**

**Board announcements:
any announcements**

Board members may have that are of interest to our members

ACB summer auction donation

Member sound off

Adjournment

Steve moved and Penny seconded to adopt the proposed meeting agenda with the addition of a discussion of AB371. The motion passed unanimously.

Linda moved and Christy seconded the motion to approve the March meeting minutes with corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

Correction: The charter granted to Inclusive Diversity of California and the provision of a \$500 stipend will now be noted

in the March minutes as separate motions.

Jeff moved and Rob seconded the motion to accept the treasurer's report. The motion passed unanimously.

Summary:

\$86,086.15 starting balance

\$14,458 payable

\$3,000 ACB dues

\$12,500 deposits in transit convention related

\$84,128.12 expected balance at end of month

**President's Report—
Gabe Griffith**

Convention stuff: As of this meeting, we have 164 people registered for our convention in two weeks. CCB has 540 certified members with ACB,

including 13 life members. Our convention count may be down slightly from last year by about 15 members.

Our web site redesign group is starting their work.

Announcements

Judy announced that we have received our first dividend of \$1,000 from Onthemuv.

Frank noted that the LightHouse is offering COVID vaccines on Fridays.

He also mentioned that CAAVL is selling See's chocolate.

Vita invited everyone to SF trivia night on Saturday April 10.

Jeff reported on AB371, a bill that begins to

address the dangers to pedestrians posed by negligent scooter users. The bill passed through committee with a vote of 7 to 0 with 2 abstentions. Everyone agrees that the bill doesn't go far enough in identifying liability for either manufacturers or end users.

Judy moved and Christy seconded a motion to accept Jeff's suggestion to donate a basket of California made products to the ACB auction. The motion passed unanimously. The basket could include 2 olive oils and 4 jellies for \$100 + shipping.

We will need to provide photos for the auction.

Member Sound Off

Christy noted that ABIV is selling bags at 2 for \$5 plus shipping.

Sheila Gunn Cushman asked how we might strengthen AB371. Jeff says this would not be easy but groups could advocate for stronger scooter restrictions on a local level.

Ardis Bazyn will give a free coaching session as part of our ACB basket donation.

Regina Brink said she went to the scooter hearing and that people should listen to the recording.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 PM.

* * *

New Tidbits

Vision Revision

David Sinclair of Harvard Medical School and colleagues restored vision in mice by recapturing youthful gene function, demonstrating that reprogramming nerve cells of the eye to an earlier age may be possible in humans. In

addition to resetting the cells' aging clock, the researchers successfully reversed vision loss in animals with a condition mimicking human glaucoma, a leading cause of blindness around the world. Read the Harvard Medical School news story at:

masseyeandear.org/news/press-releases/2020/12/hms-scientists-reverse-age-related-vision-loss-eye-damage-from-glaucoma-in-mice

Cortex Over Reflex

Study Traces Circuits Where Executive Control Overcomes Instinct

Mriganka Sur of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Picower Institute and colleagues showed that neurons in a part of the brain that understands rules and implements plans (the anterior cingulate cortex) connect to an evolutionarily older region of the brain that commands reactive, reflexive movements called the superior

colliculus. This connection enables the anterior cingulate cortex to override the superior colliculus, when necessary. Read the MIT news story at:

www.technologynetworks.com/neuroscience/news/cortex-over-reflex-where-higher-thinking-overtakes-instinct-343464

LSU Health New Orleans Discovers Drug Development Target for Retinal Dystrophies

Nicolas Bazan of Louisiana State University's Neuroscience Center of Excellence and colleagues reported new findings relevant to the expression of RPE65, a gene involved in the inherited retinal disease Leber congenital

amaurosis (LCA). In mice, deleting an RPE65 gene inhibitor called FATP4 prevented degeneration of cones—the light-sensing cells in the retina that humans use for color vision, and the cells that are degraded by LCA.

"This study is the first to uncover that FATP4 plays a pivotal role in photoreceptor survival and function in retinal dystrophies," Bazan said. Read the LSU news story at:

**[www.eurekalert.org/
pub_releases/2020-12/
lsh-lhn120120.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-12/lsh-lhn120120.php)**

The Tree of Cortical Cell Types Describes the Diversity of Neurons in the Brain

**Andreas Tolias of
Baylor College of Medicine
and colleagues**

characterized brain cell diversity. Using a technique called Patch-seq they constructed a large multimodal database that includes single-cell genetic, anatomical, and physiological information from the mouse motor cortex. Read the Baylor news story at:

**[www.nei.nih.gov/
about/news-and-events/
news/tree-cortical-cell-
types-describes-diversity-
neurons-brain](http://www.nei.nih.gov/about/news-and-events/news/tree-cortical-cell-types-describes-diversity-neurons-brain)**

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CCB Officers And Directors

As Of July, 1, 2021, June 30, 2022

Officers

**President: Gabe Griffith (2020-2022, 1st term), Concord,
925-222-5762 gabe.griffith@ccbnet.org**

**1st Vice President: Sarah Harris (2021-2023, 1st term),
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**2nd Vice President: Rob Turner (2020-2022, first term),
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**Secretary: Linda Porelle (2021-2023, 2nd term), San
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**Treasurer: Lisa Presley-Thomas (2020-2022, 2nd term),
Fresno, 559-250-6760 C, lisa.thomas@ccbnet.org**

**Immediate Past President: Judy Wilkinson (2020-?), San
Leandro, 510-388-5079 C, judy.wilkinson@ccbnet.org**

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Steve Bauer (2021-2023, 2nd term), Culver City, 310-738-2853 C, steve.bauer@ccbnet.org

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Larry Gassman (2020-2022, 1st term), Fullerton, 562-706-7710, larry.gassman@ccbnet.org

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Penny Valdovinos (2021-2023, 2nd term), Bakersfield, 661-378-8282, penny.valdovinos@ccbnet.org

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Frank Welte (2020-2022 2nd term), San Leandro, 510-541-1442 C, frank.welte@ccbnet.org

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Susan Glass, Associate Editor, editor@ccbnet.org

Sarah Harris

Daveed Mandell

Lynne Nishihara

Roger Petersen

Andrea DeKlotz

*** * ***

Donations

If you, a family member, or a friend would like to remember the California Council of the Blind in your Will or estate planning, 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, please contact the executive office for additional information. Thank you.