

**The**



**Advocate**

**Summer Edition 2023**

**PCB- A Peer Network for All Impacted  
by Vision Loss**

# **PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF THE BLIND**

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## **MISSION**

**To promote independence and opportunities for all people with vision impairments.**

## **VISION**

**To continue to be recognized as the leading advocacy organization for people with vision impairments in Pennsylvania. The aim of all**

**our efforts is to encourage and assist people in achieving their potential as valued members of society. PCB assistance, advocacy, and encouragement will be carried out in such areas as, but not limited to, all aspects of accessibility, transportation, education, employment, entertainment, recreation, and quality of life.**

### **DISTRIBUTION**

**The PCB Advocate is available in large print, braille, audio cartridge, and email. Send changes of address or format preference to the PCB office. Contents are available to the public via [pcb1.org](http://pcb1.org) and the PCB Information Line at 773-572-6314.**

### **EDITOR'S NOTE**

**Articles in this publication reflect the views of the individual writers. They do not necessarily represent the views and policy of PCB.**

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## **SUBMITTING ARTICLES**

**If you wish to submit articles for consideration,  
submission deadlines are:**

**March 1, Spring**

**June 1, Summer**

**September 1, Fall**

**November 20, Winter**

**Email articles to: [advocate@pcb1.org](mailto:advocate@pcb1.org)**

**Address inquiries to: Sue Lichtenfels,  
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## **New Phone System**

**This month PCB has updated its phone system to accommodate multiple lines. The call-in numbers are the same: 717-920-9999 or toll-free, 877-617-7407. Now an automated attendant will ask where to direct your call. Once prompted, press 800 for Autumn Imhoff, Administrative Secretary and 900 for Thad Graham, Outreach and Engagement Specialist. Please spread the word throughout PCB.**

## **Time to Vote at ACB Convention**

**By Chris Hunsinger, PCB President**

**Yes, it's a bit long, and it's a bit complicated, but you need this information if you want to have any impact on ACB during the National Convention this year. Anyone registered as a member with the National office by May 19<sup>th</sup> is**

**eligible to vote; the right to vote is not tied to convention registration. The below information is a combination of information sent to affiliate presidents of ACB and a little clarification added by me for our peers here in Pennsylvania on how voting will work this year.**

**ACB will begin conducting convention business virtually on the Zoom Webinar platform the week of June 19-23, 2023. Each evening of that week, sessions will begin at 7 p.m. CDT which is 8 p.m. in Pennsylvania's time zone. The schedule will be as follows:**

**June 19—Adoption of the Standing Rules and Report from the Credentials Committee**

**June 20—First reading of the proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws followed by reading, debate, and action on proposed Resolutions.**

**June 21 and 22—Continued reading, debate, and action on proposed Resolutions.**



**June 23—Second reading and debate on the proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. Suggested changes to these proposed amendments will be entertained and voted on at this time. Voting to adopt the final version of each amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws will take place July 5 and 6.**

**Note—Voting during this week will be done using the hand-raising feature through Zoom. If 25 or more members contest the result of the vote and call for a record vote, that vote will be held July 5 and 6 using the Vote-Now system for individuals and a typical roll-call vote for affiliates.**

**The opening general session of the ACB Conference and Convention will take place on Saturday, July 1, 2023, in Schaumburg, Illinois, and streamed on ACB Media. During that session, the Nominating Committee candidate slate will be presented. The voting process will begin on Saturday July 1st with the office of**

**President and continue through each successive officer position until a contested election occurs. If an election is not contested, then the candidate submitted by the Nominating Committee will be elected by acclamation. If candidates are nominated from the floor for a position (Confirm the person you nominate is willing to run.), ACB will have a contested election and the following process will be used.**

**At the end of the general session, each nominated candidate will be allowed a total of five (5) minutes to have up to two (2) speakers endorse the candidate and explain why their candidate should be elected for the position.**

**Following these speeches, voting will commence. The vote count is comprised of two (2) parts: the individual vote and the affiliate vote.**

**Individuals will use the Vote-Now system to vote between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. CDT on the afternoons of contested elections. Affiliates**

**will cast their votes during a roll call vote the next morning during the general session. A candidate will need to receive a majority of the vote, 50 percent plus 1, to be declared the winner. If this does not happen the top two (2) candidates will need to have a run-off election.**

**On Wednesday, July 5, a final ballot will be provided through Vote-Now which contains all Constitution and Bylaw amendments, as well as resolutions which require a record vote. They will be numbered for your ease of voting “Yay” or “Nay” to each. On the morning of July 6, the affiliates will cast their votes on each of the ballot items.**

### **Vote-Now Individual Voting**

**During convention week, to cast a vote as an individual, you must have a unique voter code from Vote-Now. If ACB already has your email in their database, you should receive an email**

**around June 12, 2023. The email will provide you with the log-in link along with phone instructions for voting by phone; the same unique voter code will be used for both voting methods. The Subject line on this email will be: Ballot-ACB unique voter code. The from person on this email should be: ACB ballot code. Members who do not have an e-mail address on file in the ACB database will need to contact the National office in Minneapolis at 612-332-3242 to request their unique voter code. If a voter code is not requested by June 19, 2023, you will not be able to vote. If you misplace your unique voter code, you can get help from the Vote-Now operators or ACB's Minnesota office to obtain your code. This code can only be provided to the intended ACB member.**

**During the designated election window, July 2-5 from 2-6 p.m. CDT, you can either log-in via an internet-abled device or call the toll-free phone number to cast your vote. Operator**

**assistance is available from Vote-Now if you run into any problem. Your unique voter code will be required for each election. Each member can choose and vary which method they want to use for each election throughout the week.**

### **Affiliate Voting**

**In addition to the individual vote done through Vote-Now, PCB members also can influence the way the PCB delegates cast the affiliate's eight votes. PCB's delegates are Chris Hunsinger, Delegate and Cathy Long, Alternate Delegate. PCB peers will be able to communicate their preferences by phone, text, or email.**

**Email votes will be sent to Chris at [cs.hunsinger@verizon.net](mailto:cs.hunsinger@verizon.net)**

**Text messages will go to Cathy at 717-991-7433. PCB will hold phone calls for one hour, beginning at 7:00 p.m. EDT on any evening when there is afternoon voting for individuals**

**using Vote-Now. Speak with the delegates by calling our conference call line at 605-475-4715 or toll-free, 844-844-0414. Use access code 815419# for both numbers. Our Affiliate Votes will be divided based on the number and type of responses we have for each candidate or issue being voted on. PCB's votes will be cast during the following morning's general session.**

**There you have it in a fairly big nutshell. If you have questions, check with Chris Hunsinger for answers.**

### **Meet the outreach Man**

**By Chris Hunsinger**

**Thad Graham is PCB's new Outreach and Engagement Specialist. He is a curious person interested in learning and evolving. He lives in Tyrone, Blair County, with his wife and three**

**children. Thad has been a part of local government, education, and youth sports.**

**Ever since high school, Thad has been learning and striving to improve the world. As a teenager he worked at a drug store which evolved after high school graduation into classes to become a pharmacy Tech. That certification then got him interested in helping design a more effective curriculum and a better program for future pharmacy techs.**

**He began working for a victim services nonprofit where he learned a lot about community outreach and fundraising. That work also got him involved in student safety and mental health issues. Those concerns showed him that there was a need for more awareness of problems involving human trafficking, both to make local law enforcement aware of the severity of the problem, and to give the public information which can help friends and family recognize**

**situations that need intervention. He helped to organize such training and worked on a social media awareness campaign to combat the problem.**

**Thad was a student athlete throughout high school which naturally brought him to youth sports coaching. The information that he gained from his work with victim services allowed him to take on work involving background checks and other student safety questions when volunteer coaches were added to the youth sports program.**

**Most recently, Thad has been working with individuals who are hearing impaired. As the Pennsylvania Outreach Coordinator for Hamilton Relay, a provider of communications services for people with hearing loss, Thad has gained great experience staffing information fairs and establishing resource connections.**



**During his interview with the Executive Board of PCB Thad demonstrated his people centered attitude and enthusiasm for our mission. We were impressed by his fresh perspective on engaging the wider community in our advocacy and awareness efforts. WE hope that his work with peers, chapters, the community at large, and the government will enhance PCB's ability to be an even more meaningful voice for Visually impaired people in the state of Pennsylvania.**

**Email Thad using [pcboutreach@pcb1.org](mailto:pcboutreach@pcb1.org). When you call the PCB office at 877-617-7407, press extension 900 for Thad.**

### **Our Future Is in Our Hands**

**By the PCB Long-Range Planning Team**

**We are the Long-Range Planning Team of PCB. Our members are George Holliday, Debby Hill,**

**Chris Hunsinger, Doug Hunsinger, Sandy Marsiglia, Rose Martin, and Rodger Simmons. Our objective is to present long-range planning strategies to the PCB Board of Directors so that it can chart the future course of the organization by developing means to retain current peers; finding ways to recruit and retain new peers; and implementing methods to attract supporters.**

**Later this summer, we will be conducting a survey that will help us make our recommendations to the PCB Board about a long-range plan. We want to know how PCB is meeting your needs and what can PCB do better. When you receive the survey, you can direct our future course by completing it. The survey will be offered in braille, large print, and online Google form. Also, if you prefer, you will be able to answer the survey by phone.**

**We all have a stake in shaping the future of the organization to ensure that it continues to be an advocate for Pennsylvanians who are blind or have low vision. As the title of this article says, “Our future is in our hands.”**

### **Update! Exploring New Pathways**

**By the Conference Program and Planning Team**

**There are just a few weeks for individuals, teams, and organizations to give us their ideas for presentations at this year’s PCB Conference and Convention. This means we don’t yet have a list of scheduled sessions , but we do know a few new things since the article in the spring edition of The PCB Advocate was written.**

**First, we now have our banquet speaker, Judy Dixon. Judy’s name is synonymous with “Exploring New Pathways,” our conference**

**theme. Judy has explored new pathways for us in many of her books including, “Audio Description and How to Use It,” “Identifying and Labelling Everything,” “Capturing and Sharing the World,” and “ Your Personal Path to Fitness.” Judy has been a cross-country skier, a collector of braille writing equipment, (Yes, there is more than one kind of slate and stylus.) and an advocate for computer games which can be played by people with vision loss.**

**Her career at NLS and her interest in braille have made a difference to many of us.**

**She doesn’t have enough time to talk about all her interests and activities, so you’ll just have to come to the virtual banquet on Saturday, October 28 to see what she particularly wants us to hear about.**

**Second, at the banquet we will be presenting PCB awards to deserving people, and you can read about that process elsewhere in this PCB**

**Advocate. Please consider nominating those whose service should be honored.**

**Third, our team is looking for entertainment before sessions. WE would like recorded performances of 5-10 minutes from individuals or groups which could get us into our virtual seats and ready for our sessions of exploration. IF you want to provide a performance, get in touch with the team by contacting Team Leader, Chris Hunsinger at 412-881-9328 or [cs.hunsinger@verizon.net](mailto:cs.hunsinger@verizon.net).**

**Fourth, we are planning evening participatory activities. One night will be an Anagram game where teams of three players compete to unlock hidden words. We will likely have an Improv Theater experience where peers volunteer to participate. The volunteers will create a program guided by a scenario script that Sue Lichtenfels will prepare, and who knows where the story will go from there. The**

**event would be recorded ahead of time, and we would all be able to enjoy a journey along new pathways where we could just observe and not worry about getting lost or other consequences of trying new things. Stay tuned for more information about being a part of the troop of actors.**

**We have not yet decided on Audio described movies, plays, or tours, but we are working hard to find ways to excite everyone with audio described events. Did you ever wonder what you missed when you watched those cartoons with the fascinating noises they used to accentuate actions? It's not likely that we will run an audio described cartoon show, but that is an intriguing subject.**

**You will still have a chance to be a big winner with the 50/50 conference raffle and a somewhat smaller winner with our ever-popular door prizes. We also hope you will be**

**able to bid on and win items at PCB's annual auction.**

**The PCB Business meeting is also a part of the conference, and we must make decisions about the next round of officers as well as several board members. Depending on how active our peers and chapters are with their literal and figurative pens, we may have bylaw amendments and resolutions to vote on.**

**The PCB Conference and Convention will be held October 26-29 on the Zoom platform. Please mark those dates on your calendar. You can be a part of the planning, and influence the program, by reading the related articles in this issue and paying close attention to the PCB listservs for additional information. Once again, registration will be FREE, so tell your friends about PCB's amazing conference tradition!**

## **Who Should PCB Honor?**

**Every year PCB honors individuals and organizations who have been instrumental in furthering independence and opportunities for people who are blind or have experienced vision loss. Again this year, at our annual conference, held virtually from October 26-29, 2023, we will bestow four awards to honor their service. We are seeking nominations from peers and professionals across Pennsylvania to help us identify deserving candidates.**

**The pool of potential nominees is ever-growing. Current members of the PCB Board of Directors are the only ineligible individuals. Guidelines describing the qualities we're looking for in each award category follow.**



**Please email nomination information to [awards@pcb1.org](mailto:awards@pcb1.org) or submit your nomination to the PCB office by calling 877-617-7407 ext. 800 by Friday, September 15, 2023. Please include contact information for both you and your nominee, which award you believe should be given, and a statement of up to 250 words describing why your nominee deserves the award.**

### **John A. Horst Champion of Independence**

**The award will be given to an individual who has performed at least 20 years of professional service in fields related to the rehabilitation or the education of people who are blind or visually impaired or has Dedicated more than 20 years of service to collective advocacy and public awareness efforts that promote independence and opportunity for people with blindness or vision loss. The recipient's service contributions must be well recognized in the community in which they live or**

**throughout the state or nation as significant to the betterment of the lives of those with vision loss.**

### **TheReImage Leadership Award**

**The recipient must have overcome both the real and perceived challenges of blindness or vision loss to achieve an active, multi-faceted life, have been a role model and leader within the blindness community through service, perseverance, empowerment, or achievement, and have demonstrated to the world, through their independence and action, TheReImage of people with vision loss.**

### **Anthony B. Swartz PCB Peer Excellence Award**

**The recipient must be or have been a member of the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind for more than 10 years, have provided a long history of volunteer service to PCB's events, projects, or chapters, and have demonstrated**

**distinguished service by taking on leadership roles within PCB or regularly going beyond expectations in service to PCB and fellow peers.**

### **PCB Community Impact Award**

**The recipient of this award shall have made a significant difference in the lives of people with blindness or vision loss through a product, a service, or an employment practice that leads to greater independence and opportunity. This award may be presented to a corporation, agency, or foundation that has provided significant support to the mission or projects of PCB.**

### **Opportunities Abound**

**By the PCB Fund Development Team**

**Throughout the year, PCB offers many opportunities for peers and supporters to**

**financially enable the organization's work. Our diverse fundraisers allow even those on a fixed income to take pride in contributing to PCB. Assistance ranges from typical monetary donations to the sale of items, and from purchasing products to making in-kind or prize donations. Often the greatest boost to the success of these opportunities is spreading the word about them beyond the PCB community, to friends and family near and far who might also wish to enable our work.**

**The PCB Calendar Raffle is a six-month opportunity to win cash every day. This year's raffle began April 1 and runs through September 30. Beginning July 1, tickets go on sale for half-price, just \$10 each. That means you will still have 92 chances to at least triple your investment in PCB. Prizes range from \$30 to \$125. Give the PCB office a call to purchase tickets.**

**Also on July 1, PCB's walk team, The Keystone CaneAbles will be participating in the ACB Brenda Dillon Memorial Walk. Those present at ACB's conference in Schaumburg will physically walk, while those unable to attend will walk virtually. Peers can register to join the Keystone CaneAbles as a walker and collect sponsors, or simply contribute in support of an already-registered walker. Funds raised by all Keystone CaneAble walkers will be split 50/50 in support of ACB and PCB. Visit <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/acbwalk2023/team/924194/> to participate. Contributions can be made or collected now until August. Give the PCB office a call if you need any assistance.**

**Summer is a great time to commit to being a Monthly Monetary Support (MMS) donor. This program enables our work through a minimum contribution of \$10 per month. When you initially sign up, or increase a current commitment during ACB's conference week**

**(July 1-6, 2023), you are entered into daily drawings to win great prizes. In the past, prizes have included iPhones, gift cards, flat screen TV's, Victor Stream devices, and more. A grand prize is drawn in August for all new and increased donors for the year. Through the MMS program, your monthly contribution amount is automatically deducted from your bank account or charged to your credit card. When you designate PCB as your preferred affiliate, PCB and ACB split your donation 50/50. Please give the ACB Minnesota office a call at 612-332-3242 or toll-free 800-866-3242 to pledge your monthly support.**

**Of course, the most exciting fundraiser PCB offers each year is the fall auction where supporters bid generously on items contributed selflessly by PCB peers and chapters. This year's auction will be held Sunday, October 29 as a capstone to our annual conference. Please consider making an in-kind donation of a product or service we can**

**auction off. Past items which have generated lots of interest and funds have included small electronics, braille and talking aids, gift cards, household items, baked goods, jewelry, home décor, bath and body sets, accessible games, technology training, and more. Finding a great item to donate doesn't have to break your bank account. Consider the following tips:**

**Shop the clearance sections of your favorite stores.**

**Take advantage of weekly sales and special offers on days such as Amazon Prime Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day.**

**Some credit cards and stores offer accounts that accrue points or virtual dollars throughout the year which can be used to purchase merchandise through their online portal.**

**Most online retailers offer free shipping with a minimum purchase.**

**Check your closets for brand new items that you've been saving to re-gift because they weren't quite to your taste.**

**Summer months, especially June and July are the time for semi-annual sales for many retailers with steeply discounted merchandise.**

**Once you know what item(s) you will be contributing to this year's auction, please send an email to [pcboffice@pcb1.org](mailto:pcboffice@pcb1.org) or give Autumn a call in the PCB office at 877-617-7407 ext. 800. Give her these five points of information: The item name, the donor's name, full retail value (Not what you paid for it), a description of the item, and when she can expect to receive the item from which shipper. When you purchase the item, ship it directly to Autumn:**

**Autumn L Imhoff**

**993 state route 956**

**Volant PA. 16156**

**Clearly the tastiest fundraising opportunity PCB offers is Terri Lynn's. This online store sells gourmet nuts, dried fruits, snack mixes,**



**chocolates, and more. You can stock up on these amazing treats for yourself or purchase them as a gift for others. PCB earns 20% from each item purchased through this link: [tinyurl.com/pcbtreasures](https://tinyurl.com/pcbtreasures). And if you are not an online shopper, give them a call toll-free at 800-323-0775 and let them know you are shopping to support the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind. Shipping is a \$5 flat fee unless you purchase \$30; then there is no shipping fee. Best of all, this is a year-round support opportunity.**

**The coolest feature of all these fundraising opportunities is they are open to everyone. This means we can each magnify the impact of these efforts by sharing them with our friends, family members, and networks. It costs us nothing to share a link, make a call, or speak in person to spread these opportunities with others who are interested in, and able to, support PCB's mission. . So, even those of us on a fixed income can be impactful.**

## **Apply for a \$1,000 Merit Award**

**By Suzanne Erb, Peer Engagement Leader**

**Are you an aspiring blind or visually impaired student who will be attending a post-secondary educational program this fall? If so, then you are eligible to apply for a 2023 PCB Merit Award. You heard it right! If you will be attending a vocational training program, an undergraduate or graduate college or university, and are a Pennsylvania resident, then you should apply for this award.**

**This is not a scholarship. It is an award that is given to recognize your achievements and your future commitment to your chosen career or field of study. We recognize that, as a blind or visually impaired student, you have unique needs which can be costly. It is important**

**for you to remember that you can spend this money however you wish—no strings attached.**

**To be considered for this award, please send your completed application, along with proof of registration or letter of acceptance from the school you will be attending, and two references to [meritaward@pcb1.org](mailto:meritaward@pcb1.org). If you are selected to receive an award, you will be asked to be present at a short ceremony during the 2023 PCB Conference and Convention. The conference will be held virtually October 26-29. All applicants are encouraged to attend this free event to network and learn. All of this is explained on the application form.**

**To obtain an application form, contact the PCB office at [pcboffice@pcb1.org](mailto:pcboffice@pcb1.org) or 877-617-7407.**

**All completed applications should be received no later than September 18, 2023. The two award recipients will be notified on or by**

**October 1st. Please direct any questions to Suzanne Erb at [suzerb1@comcast.net](mailto:suzerb1@comcast.net) or 215-313-0550.**

**We at PCB wish you success in all your future endeavors. We look forward to reviewing your application for the 2023 PCB Merit Award.**

**Leadership Is Within**

**By the PCB Nominating Team**

**Several years ago, PCB hosted a conference in Johnstown where the theme was, “Leadership Is For Everyone (LIFE).” Regardless of who we are or what our personal circumstances are, we all possess the ability to have influence and impact change. Although we may not have fancy titles or hefty paychecks, we are leaders based on our actions and our character. We are leaders every day when we examine situations from many perspectives and have the courage to make decisions without bias,**

**even if they are unpopular. Each of us has built up our leadership experience through involvement with work, family, religion, education, social circles, and community service. If we're living, we're leading.**

**When you get a few minutes, take some quiet time to reflect on how you have been a leader within the various roles of your life. Then consider your future leadership possibilities. Do you think about a world that is accessible to everyone? Do you have ideas for projects and strategies to bring independence, opportunity, and equality to others who are blind or are impacted by vision loss? Do you possess experiences, knowledge, or skills that can be used to change perceptions about the abilities of people with disabilities? Do you know that you already are, or want to become, a role model and leader in the mission to assist people who are new to vision loss with their adjustment process? If you answered "Yes" to any of these questions, then please take the next step in your leadership path by**

**nominating yourself for a position on the PCB Board of Directors.**

**In accordance with the PCB Bylaws, this year, at least 10 positions are up for election on PCB's board. These positions include two-year terms for all five officers: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. There are four Director positions with two-year terms and one Director position with a one-year term. Board members will be elected on Saturday, October 28 during the annual business meeting during PCB's Conference and Convention. Elected individuals will begin service on January 1, 2024.**

**Anyone who is a paid member of PCB and ACB in good standing who supports the Council values is eligible to be elected. Since much of the leadership work is accomplished virtually, it is vital that board candidates have an email**

**account and access to teleconference calling. Meetings of the entire board occur quarterly via Zoom. Prior to each meeting, reports from PCB's teams and projects are distributed for review, along with the most recent financial statements. Board members use their talents and share their ideas within PCB's teams to advance our mission to promote independence and opportunity for all persons with a visual impairment.**

**Declare your candidacy for the PCB Board of Directors by emailing an autobiographical statement of interest to the Nominating Team. In less than 250 words, share your interests, skills, experiences, and goals. Be sure to express how and why you are interested in being of service. Send that email to [nominations@pcb1.org](mailto:nominations@pcb1.org) by Tuesday, August 1, 2023.**

**In early August, the Nominating Team will work with declared candidates to record answers to these two questions:**

**What is the greatest attribute you would bring to the PCB Board of Directors?**

**On which project or area of the organization do you intend to focus your attention?**

**Then, in September, the Nominating Team will share the oral statements of all candidates on the PCB1.org website, the PCB Information Line, the PCB-L listserv, and cartridge editions of The PCB Advocate. On October 15, the Nominating Team will post the team's slate of endorsed candidates. If you have any questions about the nominations process or board member responsibilities, reach out to Sue Lichtenfels, PCB Past President at 412-480-9696 or [sueperlative73@gmail.com](mailto:sueperlative73@gmail.com).**



## **Reminders from the Parliamentary Team**

**By Carla Hayes, Parliamentary Leader**

**Before you know it, the 2023 PCB Conference and Convention will be here! If you have any proposed amendments to the PCB Bylaws or resolutions that you would like to have considered, or if your chapter or special interest affiliate plans to vote at the convention, here are three important deadlines that you will need to know.**

**First, the deadline for submitting proposed amendments to the PCB Bylaws is July 26. THIS IS A FINAL DEADLINE AND IT CANNOT BE EXTENDED! remember that any individual PCB member, committee, chapter, or group within PCB can propose changes to the PCB Bylaws. An organization's bylaws should be a living document which can be changed when circumstances make it necessary. As a member of PCB, it is a good idea to read over the PCB bylaws periodically so that you will be**

**familiar with the structure of PCB and the procedures that we follow. The PCB Bylaws can also serve as a guide to local chapters as they write or revise their own bylaws.**

**Second, August 15 is the deadline for submitting resolutions if you want them to be presented at the PCB Convention. THIS DEADLINE WILL BE ENFORCED! Only emergency resolutions of an extremely time-sensitive nature will be considered after this date and very few resolutions would fall into this category! DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO SUBMIT YOUR RESOLUTIONS! As with bylaws, resolutions can be written and submitted by any individual member of PCB, or any committee, chapter, or group within PCB. Allow time during chapter and committee meetings to discuss and work on resolutions. In past columns, I have discussed "WHEREAS" and "RESOLVE" clauses and guidelines for crafting an effective resolution. This information will be reviewed in future columns. For now, use PCB and ACB resolutions as models when writing your resolutions and feel**

**free to call on the Parliamentary Team for help. Also, if you are submitting a resolution, plan on being present on a Parliamentary Team conference call to review your resolution with the team and help make modifications if necessary. Polished resolutions are more likely to pass.**

**Finally, chapters and special interest affiliates who plan to have delegates present at the convention should submit the names of their delegates to the PCB Office by October 19. This is a week before the start of the convention. Delegates will be authorized by the Parliamentary Team during the convention.**

**All proposed bylaw changes and resolutions can be submitted by email to me at [lengual@verizon.net](mailto:lengual@verizon.net). Alternatively, they can be mailed in any format (braille preferred) to:**

**Carla Hayes  
230 Robinhood Lane  
McMurray, PA 15317.**

**If you have any questions or if you need help**

**writing your bylaws amendment or resolutions, please feel free to call me at 724-941-8184.**

## **Stay in Touch Nationally**

**By Chris Hunsinger, President**

**When you pay your dues to Pennsylvania Council of the Blind (PCB), you are also paying dues to American Council of the Blind (ACB). The two organizations together give you a broad array of activities, events, and information. This article is a taste of how you can stay in touch with ACB nationally.**

**Do you hear about Community Calls only after they happen? Do you belong to a Special Interest Affiliate but don't always know what is going on in the Affiliate?**

**Do you want to know more about the ACB Media schedule?**

## **Are you interested in all things Audio Description?**

**There are many ways that you can stay in touch with what is going on at the National level of ACB. There are email lists, recorded phone summaries, Podcasts, and information forwards that PCB leaders share to PCB email lists about national happenings. You may want to join one of ACB's many email lists to get national information directly. Read this article to learn about the options:**

**<https://acblists.org/g/main/subgroups>**

**This is a long list of email groups that ACB currently posts to or has posted to in the past. The lists show when they last had postings, so you will know if one group has become inactive. I wouldn't waste my time on any group on the list which appears to be inactive.**

**You can also join email lists you find interesting when you receive forwarded**

**emails. Messages we forward from ACB typically have instructions near the bottom of the message about Subscribing to the originating list.**

**Often, we don't forward messages posted to the ACB Conversation list or messages that show that the sender was ACB. Emails from ACB are typically sent directly to everyone who has given ACB an Email address. As for the conversation list, it is chatty and open to everyone. People discuss an array of topics which you may or may not find interesting. Of course, you can mute a particular topic on that list if you are tired of it or hit the delete key.**

**One problem with being on these national lists is that many people tend to post the same message on several lists. You could get a copy of the same message from Conversation, Library Users, Braille Revival League, etc. But**

**if you don't belong to any of these lists, you won't get even one copy of the message.**

**As your president, I do tend to forward messages to PCB lists if they come from the list where all affiliate presidents share information or if the message is only posted to ACB leadership. Those two lists have limited distribution. When affiliate presidents post to their list, they tell us when it is information for all of us to share.**

**You may well want to join the Community list because the daily schedule and links for all the discussion calls ACB hosts each day are emailed the evening before. And any last-minute changes to the Zoom info are posted here when necessary.**

**There are several Announce lists like the one for the ACB Convention and the one for ACB Media.**

**The ACB Community has become so active that different groups like cooking and Crafting have created specialized email lists.**

**I don't use Facebook myself, but many groups within ACB share a lot of information that way as well.**

**ACB offers podcasts of many of its events in case you miss something. You can get to many podcasts from the [acbmedia.org](http://acbmedia.org) website. There are podcasts of sessions from ACB Conventions, Community calls, audio described tours, and more. There are also podcasts of affiliate conventions and meetings if ACB helped the affiliate broadcast or Zoom their events. Two new podcast feeds were just announced in April.**



**“ACB Media is proud to announce the addition of two new podcast feeds, “ACB Business” and “Podcasts en español de la ACB” available through Apple Podcasts. “ACB Business” is where all official business meetings of ACB will be posted, including ACB Board meetings and ACB Committee meetings. The RSS feed URL is <https://pinecast.com/feed/acb-business>.**

**“Podcasts en español de la ACB” is where all Spanish language podcasts will be posted. Here you will find the podcasts of the Legislative Seminar and Presidents’ Meetings that were simultaneously translated during the events. The RSS feed URL is <https://pinecast.com/feed/acb-espanol>. Update your podcatcher to subscribe to these feeds. These feeds will soon also be available on [acbmedia.org](http://acbmedia.org).”**

**You can listen to events on ACB media as they happen if you know which channel to go to. If you do this, you can only listen and not**

**participate. There are now ten ACB Media channels. You can listen on a smart speaker, go to the [acbmedia.org](http://acbmedia.org) website, use the ACB Link app on your smart phone, use the internet radio capability on your Victor Stream or other blindness specific device, or call that magic long-distance toll phone number that ACB uses for people with no internet access**

**There are two concerns about this phone method as shared by ACB.**

**“Dial 1 (518) 906-1820. Listen to the menu prompts and press the number for the stream you want. Please note this is a free service provided by Zeno Media. This service is limited in terms of simultaneous listeners and ACB does not warrant this service.”**

**I had seen a note in my email which indicated that ACB was having problems with this number. When I called it to check the accuracy of the information I was sharing, the menu was there, but channels were shown as offline. I**

**don't know if this method will be available in the future.**

**ACB continued in their explanation, "If dial-in is your only option and the program is originating in Zoom, we recommend that you dial-in to the Zoom meeting / webinar directly."**

**If you take advantage of connecting live through zoom or clubhouse, you will be able to put in your own two cents worth when questions and comments are solicited.**

**ACB also has a toll-free number where you can listen to the ACB Community call schedule for the week. I don't know if they update the information on this recording if the links have changed after the list is posted for the week. The number is 800-424-8666. The menu is currently not accurate because it only says to dial 1024 to get the Community call Schedule. There are at least two other recordings available at this number. If you punch in 1004, you can get the Washington Connection, and if**

**you punch in 1016, you get National Convention information.**

**Of course, we all know about The Braille Forum and The E Forum which are published in alternating months. Dots and Dashes comes out every other week from ACB to try to keep us all up to date. This is sent out automatically to anyone for whom ACB has an email address.**

**The ACB website at [acb.org](http://acb.org) has more information than you can imagine about the organization, past and current projects, and external resources. When you can't use these electronic resources for ACB, there is always the opportunity to call the national office at 202-467-5081. This is just a taste of the resources available to all of us through ACB. Use them to become better informed.**

## **Gizmos Everywhere!**

**By Jule Ann Lieberman, Vision Loss Resource  
Leader**

**Remember a time when you could enter a store, bank, or doctor's office ,and talk to a person? As the old song goes, "Those Were the Days My Friend." Today we frequently encounter a tablet touch screen or keyboard that requires you to enter information before you can proceed to the next step to a real person. And how many are you able to enter independently if you have low vision or are blind? Chances are good that these devices are not accessible with text to speech or with a tactile keyboard.**

**What would be your options? At a store you can contact customer service. If you can locate such a representative you could call ahead and ask for a customer service person to help, or simply choose to shop elsewhere .**

**In doctor's offices, urgent care centers, and many medical laboratories, all personnel are behind doors. Often your first step is to enter all your information into a touch screen tablet. This may require you to have assistance by someone with vision, which is fine if this is a person you trust with your information, but far from independent and private.**

**Sitting in a waiting room alone and at the mercy of the next staff member who opens a door, so you can ask for help, is less than comfortable for us all. Some offices and labs will give you an opportunity to sign in with a staff member if you ask for assistance. Of course, they expect you to ask for assistance by tapping an icon on that tablet screen. One simple solution to this would be a raised tactile mark on the sign-in screen indicating the "Request Help" button. This would be useful to all of us with vision limitations, so we are not stuck trying to catch the attention of a staff member entering the waiting room. If you**

**happen to use a smart phone and the health systems portal, then you can schedule an appointment, but it would be nice if you could use that portal app to sign in when you arrive. I know we all have relied on the kindness of strangers to assist when sighted help is needed but it would be even better if we had other options.**

**With regards to banking and transportation, the U.S. Department of Justice rules promulgated in 2010 under the Americans with Disabilities Act, required at least one automated teller and one fare machine at each location to be speech-enabled by no later than March 15, 2012. The machines would then provide step-by-step instructions when earphones are plugged in. But in April 2023, Consumer Reports tested ATMs at various banks in Boston and found many either did not have this access or the speech was transmitted through a speaker even when headphones were plugged in for privacy. The**

**fare machines tested at the transit locations all had speech capability, yet it was not unusual for a blind user to have to move to another machine because the speech feature was not working on everyone, adding to wasted time and frustration. Accessibility may have been installed, yet maintenance to keep it functioning was likely not part of the upkeep plan.**

**I admit that I typically do banking transactions using my bank's mobile app, except for depositing any checks I receive in the mail. I could use the app to snap the image of the check, and follow the steps to complete the transaction, however it may take multiple attempts to get the image correct. I do end up asking a sighted family member for help when I deposit these few checks each year. My paycheck is automatically deposited to my account, and I can check balances and transactions on the mobile app as needed. When I need fast cash because the**



**vendor or store does not accept credit or debit cards, I must find the elusive accessible ATM.**

**I have not yet used the talking fare machines for the transit here in Philadelphia. I purchased my fare card and created an online account so I can deposit funds electronically on the card.**

**It is possible to connect to sighted assistants using smart phone apps or wearable camera devices. But this too can also be time consuming to make the connection and direct the camera to enable the sighted assistant to guide you to make the correct choices and also have the headphones ready to hear your instructions privately.**

**Whenever I encounter gizmos or gadgets that do not allow me to perform the task at hand independently, I find it helpful to first point out the deficits to the store or medical office**

**politely. In most cases the response is also polite, and assistance is provided. If the person assisting you is not in a position of authority, ask to speak to the manager regarding the inaccessible gizmo. If this is not possible, request the contact information for the corporate office and file your complaint.**

**The more companies that hear from us, the more likely it will draw their attention to the inaccessibility of the devices. If no response is given to you after this step, take the time to contact your representatives at the city, state, and federal levels who can take an interest and contact the entity to make changes or repairs. Have all the facts ready, describe the issue, location, date, and time. These facts will support your claim so that remediation can begin. There is power in your voice , no action begins unless you speak up!**

**Overbrook School for the Blind Announces  
Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient: Daisy L.  
Morgan**

**From the Overbrook School Press Office**

**Overbrook School for the Blind is pleased to announce Daisy L. Morgan as the recipient of the prestigious Distinguished Alumni Award for 2023. The award recognizes outstanding achievements, contributions to society, and dedication to the Overbrook community.**

**Daisy Morgan, a member of the Class of 1975, attended Overbrook School for the Blind from 1960 to 1975. Throughout her time at Overbrook, Daisy displayed remarkable dedication, compassion, and leadership. She served as a mentor to younger students in the dormitory and was a valued member of the switchboard staff during her high school years.**

**Following her graduation, Daisy pursued further education at business school, commencing her professional career as a**

**switchboard operator at Overbrook from September 1979 to March 1982. She later joined Associated Services for the Blind in October 1986, where she worked tirelessly until her retirement in July 2020. Daisy's commitment to her work and the blind community has been unwavering throughout her career.**

**Not only has Daisy excelled in her professional endeavors, but she has also dedicated her time and talents to various volunteer activities. She has been an active member of the alumni choir, now known as the Nevilaires, spreading joy through her singing. Daisy has served as the secretary of the Overbrook Alumni Association and held the position of Treasurer for the Philadelphia Regional chapter of the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind. Additionally, she has been the esteemed chairperson of the special needs committee of the Overbrook Alumni Association for numerous years.**

**"We are proud to recognize Daisy L. Morgan as the recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award," said Todd Reeves, Executive Director and CEO of Overbrook School for the Blind.**

**"Her remarkable success, resilience, and continuous dedication to serving the blind community make her an exemplary role model for our students and alumni."**

**The Distinguished Alumni Award will be presented to Daisy Morgan during the Graduation Ceremony on Wednesday, June 14, 2023, at 6:30 P.M.**

**Overbrook School for the Blind congratulates Daisy L. Morgan on this well-deserved honor and applauds her for the positive impact she has made on society and the lives of individuals with visual impairments.**

## **The Importance of Peers**

**By Jeanette Schmoyer**

**When I began losing eyesight at age 12, I was surprised but not devastated. I had a role model in my father, who, in spite of significant vision loss, had become a very successful businessman. As time went on, my three younger siblings also began to lose eyesight. They said having watched me go through school with low vision as their oldest sibling encouraged them.**

**My peers in my early life, as stated above, were my family. After I was married and my siblings were scattered, I found the local Association for the Blind. There I found a place for learning about accommodations for my vision loss that I had not known before. I also found a new group of peers who shared with and cared for one another.**

**A few years later, through John Horst, Leroy and Mary Price, and Tony Swartz, I was introduced to the Pennsylvania Council of the blind. I was included in the team that established the Lehigh Valley Council of the Blind (LVCB) in 1993. I learned the value of a membership of persons who are blind or have low vision. While the Association for the Blind was an organization that provided services for blind people, the Council of the Blind was led by persons who are blind or have low vision.**

**Watching those blind leaders was inspiring and encouraging for me to step up and**

**Become one of those leaders. I became an active member of the Lehigh Valley chapter of PCB. In time I became secretary and served for several years in that position and then became president of the chapter. In time, I joined the PCB Board of Directors. As I look back over those years and all the peers I learned to**

**know, I feel a gratitude that fills my heart and soul. My peers on all these paths of my life, many of whom I have known for 30 years in LVCB and PCB are as much family as my blood siblings.**

**If you are new to vision loss, I urge you to find a group of peers, others who are living with vision loss. Find your local PCB chapter by contacting the PCB office at 877-617-7407 or visiting [pcb1.org](http://pcb1.org). You may also want to locate your local association for the blind. Many of them have created names which do not indicate “association” or “blind,” so you may need to contact the statewide association for local information. Reach them at 717-766-2020 or [pablind.org](http://pablind.org).**

**If you are losing your eyesight, be brave and step out of your comfort zone and reach out to a place where you will find peers going through vision loss. You will be rewarded with**



**new insights, new knowledge, and new wonderful friends.**

## **A Small Epiphany**

**By Tony Swartz**

**I fully acknowledge that no one will ever accuse me of being the sharpest tool in the shed or the brightest bulb in the chandelier. I'm often quite late to the party. Though I've been familiar with the phrase for quite a while, I had one of those rare moments of Epiphany when listening to a recent episode of Jonathan Mohsen's podcast "Living Blindfully." He referred to the phrase, "Nothing about us, without us," when he was discussing Apple's wavering commitment in involving the disabled community in its development of disability-based features in iOS. The point he was making isn't the subject here, rather it is my aha moment experienced when hearing the phrase. Who can say why, but in that moment, its meaning fully struck. Its meaning is what**

**I've been circling around for much of my life. It is, for instance, why I have such a visceral reaction to the fundraising mailers from my local PAB.**

**In the event that you've just emerged from a cave, or like me, you've just let the words travel in one ear and out the other, the slogan, "Nothing about us, without us" is a fundamental principle in disability philosophy and activism. It emphasizes the importance of including our voices and perspectives as people with disabilities in discussions and decisions affecting our lives. This principle is rooted in the belief that we as disabled individuals should be actively involved in shaping policies, practices, and attitudes that impact our rights and well-being.**

**There is a long history of marginalization and exclusion of people with disabilities in the participation and shaping of policy and practice in those decisions that directly affect us. All too often we have been, and still are treated as passive recipients of care, with**

**decisions made on our behalf by non-disabled individuals, such as medical professionals, service providers, policymakers, and even family members. This paternalistic approach ignores our unique experiences and perspectives as disabled individuals, perpetuating stereotypes and reinforcing societal barriers.**

**The principle, "Nothing about us, without us" challenges a paternalistic approach by advocating for our active involvement and meaningful participation in all matters that concern us. It is the recognition that we possess valuable insights and expertise on disability issues that can inform and shape policies, services, and societal attitudes. This principle aligns with the broader philosophy of disability rights, which asserts that disability is a natural part of human diversity rather than a deficit to be fixed or overcome. "Nothing about us, without us" promotes the idea that disability is not solely an individual issue rather it is a social construct that arises from barriers and discrimination within society. By**

**including us in decision-making processes, the philosophy acknowledges our agency and affirms our right to self-determination.**

**O sure, very late to the party, but I've come to the conclusion that "Nothing about us, without us" should be a guiding principle in the decisions and conclusions we reach as an advocacy organization, whether policy development, advocacy efforts, and even the monetary contributions we will accept.**

**Lastly, as an advocacy organization of individuals with disabilities, we can't begin to live this philosophy, as long as we ignore and maintain our separateness from the greater community of individuals with disabilities. For so long many blindness advocacy leaders have promoted our separateness, that we were ahead of the rest, as if we were in competition with the rest of the disability community. Seems to me that many of our leaders would benefit from a small epiphany of their own.**

## **Underwriting Contributions**

**Contributions are encouraged to support the accessible formatting of The PCB Advocate in braille, DAISY audio cartridge, large print, and electronic Word file. Donations are tax deductible. Gifts can be made by credit card either online at [pcb1.org](http://pcb1.org) or by phone to 877-617-7407. Donations by check can be mailed to PCB, PO Box 68, Volant, PA 16156-0068.**

## **PCB Teams and Leaders**

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**(Meets Third Monday 7:30 p.m. in odd months  
and Advocacy for All Calls in even months.)**

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