THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN

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In accepting material for THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN, priority will be given to articles concerning the activities and policies of the California Council of the Blind and to the experiences and concerns of blind persons. Recommended length is 1800 words.

The deadline to submit material for the Fall 2018 issue of THE BLIND CALIFORNIAN is noon, September 15, 2018.

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From the Editor

By Mike Keithley

Welcome to the summer issue of the Blind Californian.

One thread wandering through this issue of the BC is the passing of Ken Metz, an influential leader in CCB. In this and the fall issues, we'll publish memorials of Ken. I hope we do Ken justice. In addition, the CCB Board has unanimously voted to induct Ken into the CCB Hall of Fame!

We also have a rich and detailed report on the 2018 CCB conference and convention plus an amusing poem by Bonnie Rennie.

In closing, it's been reported that the Marrakesh Treaty has been voted out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and will soon be addressed by the full Senate. So write your senators to pass it!

The Journey Forward

By Judy Wilkinson

I called Pam Metz on her home phone the other day, and who's exuberant, cheery voice should answer but Ken's! This shortly after my calling his cell phone from Venice to hear his hilarious

message: complete with "Woofs." The loss of his larger-than-life presence leaves a huge sadness and silence in our CCB family. See tributes to this dear man elsewhere in this (and the next) BC.

This loss, so soon after his election to the second vice-presidency, cannot but dampen the high of our recent conference and convention. But what a convention it was: from exciting debates about our bylaws, to interesting informative speakers in general and other sessions, to terrific exhibits despite our conflict with CSUN (not a problem next year), to new editions such as the **Beethoven and Friends** concert, our river walk, a tactile art exhibition, our

banquet with its entertainment and awards. And how about Dining in the Dark! We set a classy tone and a high bar for next year! And we had the most convention sponsorships ever (around \$15,000) and the lowest deficit ever: (around \$2,000).

As I near the end of my first term, here are some of the things on my plate as I return from my wonderful month-long vacation to visit friends in England for three weeks, followed by the dream-of-a-lifetime nine-day visit to Venice with Steve and Carly.

A substantial focus this year is on our major gifts campaign. (See my article in the Spring BC for more details). For projects to

be undertaken in that campaign, the Board will frame a request for member input at an important public meeting on June 14.

Though we adopted a resolution to attempt to forge a connection with a like-minded organization in our advocacy efforts, we must plan for Jeff Thom's decision to step back from his work as our legislative advocate. Without Jeff's willingness to serve in this unpaid, nearly full-time position, we could never have had such a meaningful presence in the legislature. Thank goodness Jeff isn't going away! He plans to remain involved as we work on filling his shoes on our Governmental Affairs

Committee, and for boots on the ground next year in Sacramento.

Luckily, Jeff has agreed to continue as chair of the **Convention Planning** Committee for 2019. Last year as an experiment, I chaired the overall convention committee that we assumed would have a number of subcommittees: which turned out to be unwieldy. So this year we return to one convention program committee, but rest assured that when Jeff politely asks, "Madam President, do you have any thoughts?" the usual reply of "When does Madam president not have thoughts!" will be heard.

The Bylaws committee will resume its work in June, and before next year's

vote, we plan to have a number of major supporting policies in place so that we can indeed adopt a more streamlined set of bylaws.

I am happy to report that Alameda County paid us for 2016 and 2017 as per our settlement agreement in the Alameda voting machine case, and the mediated part of this ongoing legal matter comes to a close at the end of May. I will be reporting to the Board and seeking their advice as to future efforts in this case. Stay tuned.

In response to the terrific regional meeting of CCB chapters in Southern California in late January, we gained an appreciation of how much we think of, and will miss Ken Metz.

We are planning a meeting in Fresno on June 9 with Central California chapters and another on September 15 for Bay Area chapters. I hope we will return soon for another visit to Southern California.

Two Californians will become "angels" at this year's American Council of the Blind Convention. Thanks to our Bay View, Capitol and San Francisco chapters, Al Gil will be recognized, though we may not be in time to have a statement during ACB's opening ceremonies. Donations from a number of individuals means that Teddie-Joy Remhild will take her place as an Angel.

One of my responsibilities as your president is to serve as California's delegate. To that end, I

will serve on the Nominating Committee, where several Board and **Board-of-Publications** positions will be in play. Remember you can text or call me during the convention to make your wishes known. Steve and I also plan to contribute wine to the ACB auction and, as captain of the California Colossals, I'll be seeking your donations in the 10th anniversary **Brenda Dillon Memorial** Walk, an ACB fundraiser. And remember, 50 percent of what you donate comes back to CCB! The link to donate to this event is acb.donorpages.com/2018

ACBWalk/CaliforniaColoss als.

I close with my heart-felt thanks for electing me to a second term as your president. I realize however that re-election doesn't necessarily imply unanimity. I understand that fear of change and misunderstanding of what we're trying to accomplish exist. I can only promise that I will keep doing my best to communicate fully, respond to your concerns, and do my utmost to advance the interests of our organization and our members as we journey forward.

From Paul Shane

Greetings Friends:

I want to begin by taking a moment to express my deep sadness regarding the passing of Ken Metz. I will miss the "smile in his voice and the joke on his tongue greatly in the days ahead.

Next I would like to thank everyone who helped with the convention and our first Dining in the Dark event together. The multiple moving parts that had to be greased and maintained to put on these events successfully, and simultaneously were enormous and we absolutely could not have done it without you, my "behind the scenes unsung heroes!"

A convention report appears later in this issue of the BC. We benefited from one hundred eighty-eight community volunteers who dedicated over one thousand five hundred hours of time, which is equivalent to approximately thirty-five thousand dollars in in-kind donations to the CCB.

Dining in the Dark went very well and opened a lot of doors to future relationships for the CCB. The event made over twenty-five thousand dollars and was attended by one hundred and seventy-five people. It was financially supported by six corporate sponsors, one private family, and numerous other people

who made in-kind donations to the cause. We are still working on final figures, but we think the event cleared at least \$2,500. This is excellent for such a first-time effort, and this event should raise much more money next year as the signature effort in our Major Gifts campaign. Finally I want to thank Judy Wilkinson and the CCB Board of **Directors for their support** of Dining in the Dark and the convention. Judy, as **Board President, truly led** by example by single handedly raising ten thousand dollars in convention sponsorships and nine hundred and fifty dollars for Dining in the Dark. She then went a step further and spent six thousand five hundred

dollars of her own money at the auctions. All told, Judy "gave or got" seventeen thousand four hundred and fifty dollars in support of this year's events. Not bad Judy, not bad at all. Now that we know what you can do, we of course expect more next year.

Approximately ninetyeight percent of the CCB **Board of Directors** financially contributed to support Dining in the Dark. This is HUGE!! I have been putting on events for over twenty-five years now, and the largest Board contributions that I have ever experienced was around eighty percent from an organization with about ten times the budget of the CCB. Special thanks to Sarah Harris, Fresno

Chapter President, for chairing the event committee, recruiting a table sponsor, and for sharing her story, which resulted in five thousand dollars in donations to the CCB in five minutes.

Special thanks to Frank Welte, San Francisco
Chapter President for contributing to the event script. Frank's contribution insured a

positive and empowering atmosphere for all attendees and kept all aspects of the event aligned with the vision and mission of the CCB.

We still have a long road ahead of us, but I can confidently state that our feet are solidly of the pathway to a long-term prosperous future for the CCB.

Governmental Affairs Report

By Jeff Thom

The hot Sacramento summer is looming, and the heat not only hits the streets of Sacramento, but also invades the Capitol building itself. Let's take a peek at some of the very hot topics that most

impact people who are blind or have low vision.

Our bill, AB1865 (Lackey) to strengthen protections against owners of dogs that attack service animals, is swiftly moving through the process. It

has already passed the Assembly and has passed its first Senate committee. We expect little, if any, opposition in the Legislature, but we must convince the Governor that he should not repeat his veto of almost the same bill we ran two years ago, as we have taken out provisions to which he objected. We will eventually be calling for letters to the Governor, and your help is absolutely crucial.

As usual, the SSI debate is always a hot item, and CCB, as part of the Californians for SSI Coalition, is actively involved. AB3200, which is not likely to pass, would raise benefits for all up to the federal poverty level, and perhaps most

importantly for blind recipients, re-institute the annual state cost-of-living adjustment to benefits. With this Governor, the expense of such a bill is not likely to be favorably acted upon, although the budget committees currently have a small increase in the budget, so stay tuned! Moreover, the next Governor should be far more favorably disposed towards SSI increases. However, on a positive note, momentum is building, and we should know long before this magazine is produced, whether the state will opt to end the prohibition against CalFresh (food stamps) for SSI recipients. This is the most costeffective way that the state can provide benefits to

SSI recipients, as the cost of the program is almost exclusively federal.

An important bill for persons who are blind or have low vision, and which we are cosponsoring along with **Disability Rights** California, is SB1396, Galgiani, which would establish a state Office of Accessible Technology in order to ensure that state websites and other platforms are accessible. By the time you read this, we will know whether it made it through the Senate and thus would then be heard this summer in the Assembly.

The advocacy work that CCB undertakes deals with many subjects, but few are of more importance to us than

braille. AB3223 would change the definition of braille in the Education Code from Standard **English Braille to the** currently used Unified **English Braille. Because** of the CCB's involvement, we are ensuring that the bill protects the use of Nemeth Code in the teaching of braille mathematics, and this has led the way to other amendments to protect specialized music and foreign language systems. Many thanks to the Contra Costa Chapter for advocating with the author, Assembly Member Grayson on this bill. It is our work on bills such as AB3223 that show how important it is that CCB remain an active force in the halls of the state

Capitol.

CCB is also active on the voting rights legislation front. We are working for the passage of AB1013 (Low), which would require all counties, not just those with vote-bymail elections, to allow voters with disabilities to vote using their computers. It would enable many of us who want to vote absentee to do so in a private and independent manner. AB1013 has already passed the Assembly and has passed its first Senate committee.

We are still working on the library services funding

issue for both the Braille Institute Library and the **Braille and Talking Book** Library. Through your efforts on Capitol Day and our Governmental Affairs advocacy efforts, the issue is beginning to gain traction. Whether we can do anything this year remains unknown, although at least our federal funding was not cut. However, we will continue to face efforts to eliminate this federal funding and we must prepare to have California step up and bear at least a portion of this funding burden.

Pursuing Jazz: A Blind Woman's Advantage During Exercise

By Bonnie Rennie

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

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

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

Pursuing Jazz

Pedal to the metal, holding tight to the bar. I alternate between fast and slow, Though my destiny is not to go far.

"Where you riding to?"
His teasing intention to razz.

"To a good place!"
I smile back.

"I'm pursuing jazz!"

To the Carlsbad Sea Wall,
Or the Gaslamp District Downtown.

Skirting the vibrant flower fields.
In imagination, they bloom all year 'round.

Why not Dana Point Harbor?

The Orange Traffic circle, or that silly Great Park.

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

Up close and personal, scenery sails by,

Feel the anchor of the road,

Sun and breeze to orient,

whatever the burden, makes lighter the load.

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

Body aligns with the smooth rhythm,

Inspiring energy to press ever forward, As they say.

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

As the miles rack up, keeping me well.

Bright unclouded vistas, only happy sounds,

Let in by the image gate,

Better than pictures

Or even words could ever tell.

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

I grin,

As the tune makes me pick up my pace.

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

I always win the race!

Reporting the 2018 CCB Conference and Convention

Compiled from Reports to the GSDGHI Affiliate and the SVCB Chapter

[Editor's note: This report of the 2018 CCB

Conference and Convention is a

reports. Alice Turner and Mike Keithley reported for the SVCB chapter in its May newsletter. Maile George reported for the GSDGHI affiliate. Since this is a compilation, you should acquire the sources if necessary.

Getting There

SVCB writes: Both Alice and Mike took the Capitol Corridor train with John and Susan Glass and Rob Turner. Other SVCB people who attended the convention were John Vandervort and Lorraine Brown. Maile doesn't say how she got to the convention, so King proposes that we say she walked all the way from somewhere in Contra

Costa county. Whew, and in the rain too!

Mike roomed with Steve Fort, an old friend. "The first thing that happened after arriving in his room was the discovery that he couldn't open his suitcase" the zipper broke. But a bellboy from the hotel got the suitcase unzipped, though that thing is still broken.

So began the convention for Mike—a collection of good and not-so-good. Being able to hear in meetings was a chronic problem, CCB's ability to cover events other than the general sessions was disappointing, and he often found that he became angry about this situation. But the general sessions and banquet were on ACB radio, and he

actually used his iPhone to hear broadcasts when the ALD system was failing. The hotel's food was pretty good and not outrageously expensive.

Wednesday evening was a time for relaxing and getting familiar with the hotel's floor plan, which was quite compact and easy to understand. This year there were more volunteers than usual, even though attendance was obviously higher than last year.

Capitol Day

Maile writes: The rain was heavy on the morning of Thursday, March 22 when over twenty convention attendees rose early and traveled via light rail to the state capitol. We each had arranged our

appointments with our assigned legislators or a legislative staff person in advance. Gabe Griffith and I live in the same district. so we visited with staff from Senator Steven Glazer and Assemblyman **Timothy Grayson's offices.** We also made appointments with staff from the offices of **Assemblyman Adam Gray** (Merced) and Matthew Harper (Costa Mesa). **During telephone** meetings held prior to the convention, Jeff Thom, Legislative and **Governmental Affairs** Chair, reviewed the four legislative issues we were to discuss during our appointments. The first one was an issue that we as GSGDHI members are familiar: AB 1865. This is a

bill meant to expand protection for guide, signal and service dogs by eliminating the requirement that the dog be in discharge of its duties. The person who owns the attack dog would be required to pay for treatment of the injured service dog and the cost to replace the dog, if necessary, and cover any injuries that the guide Dog handler suffers and/or lost wages as a result of the attack.

We discussed three additional issues: the need to increase the state portion of SSI income up to the poverty level (AB 3200- Kalra), which was heard in April; SB1396, which would establish the Office of Accessible Technology and insure

that persons with vision loss have full access to online information on state services and programs, including education, employment, health and social services, housing, disaster and law enforcement services. Finally, we urged our legislators to commit to a budget allocation of \$400,000, which would send a strong message about the value that state legislators place on the shrinking federal funds allocated for library services. [See Jeff's **Governmental Affairs** report in this BC.]

Thursday Afternoon

SVCB writes: Conventionrelated things didn't begin for Mike until the Technology Committee meeting Thursday
afternoon. Though there
was no ALD transmitter
and Mike couldn't hear the
speakers well, he was
sitting next to Sheila
Somebody who
summarized what people
were saying, mighty
helpful in a pinch.

One important part of the meeting was a discussion of how visually impaired diabetics can access their glucose meters. The Prodigy system was described, together with techniques of getting an accurate blood sample on the test strip.

The current state of affairs seems to be that there is no truly accessible blood glucose meter in the United States. In Europe there are accessible systems, but they haven't

been approved in the US through the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and some that are approved are not insured by Medicare. We hope that the Dexcom system, which uses an iOS device and a sensor under the skin, will soon be universally available.

Ken Metz volunteered to set up an email listserve to discuss diabetes, and whether there is interest in forming a CCB specialinterest diabetics affiliate. Alas, Ken is gone now so someone else will do this work.

Mike went to the Credentials Committee meeting to monitor the official seating of SVCB, and its 17 votes, for the convention. Pam Palagi, Credentials Committee Chair, has been ill, but
Mike hears she is out of
the hospital and
recovering nicely. Frank
Welte did the honors. Mike
thinks it's safe to say that
SVCB is still the largest
chapter in CCB.

And Now, Dining in the Dark

Maile writes:

Approximately 25 CCB members, including many from GSGDHI and their dogs, committed to serve as table hosts during this fundraiser at which we were dressed in our finest! Christine Ha, Blind Chef and Winner of Master Chef Season Three designed the menu and was available to sign her cookbook or pose for photos. The Dining in the Dark table hosts and other

CCB members took advantage of every opportunity to highlight the 84 year history and accomplishments of the CCB. These included the number of volunteer hours, scholarships awarded, crisis support, community referrals, educational rights, talking ATMs, voting rights and the "white cane law." Prior to the five-course meal at which guests were encouraged to wear their Dining in the Dark eyeshades, a cocktail party and silent auction was held. Immediately following dinner, a lively auction took place. Generous donations to CCB were also made by donors. Though I didn't stay, Drinks and Dancing

with live DJ's took place afterwards.

SVCB writes: Thursday evening Mike went to the Dining in the Dark fundraiser for CCB. He had never attended such an event, and it was just as someone said: an expensive dinner. There was a silent auction, with some items exceeding \$5,000. And noisy, whew! There was no ALD transmitter for a time, and the couple sitting next to me was nice, but I couldn't talk to them. About halfway through the third course (there were five courses), the woman gave me a nice glass of red wine (maybe I was looking glum). And then an ALD transmitter appeared, so I could then hear the MC and his work to get

money, money, money!
(Estimates are that CCB made \$12,000 that evening alone.) The dinner featured offerings by blind chef Christine Ha, and the second course, a fish soup, was especially good.

Alice and Rob were joined at the Dining in the Dark event by Rob's brother and sister-in-law, who live close to the hotel. This made the event even more special for them. [See Paul Shane's article in this BC.]

Friday Morning

Friday morning is traditionally Mike's busy time, with meetings of the Braille Revival League of California and the California Library Users of America. There was no ALD transmitter in the

room, so he was rather crippled as to participation, but he did accept the BRLC presidency. At the CLUA Meeting, Mike Marlin, Director of the Braille and Talking Book Library, talked, But Mike missed much of his speech, which is covered later, so there! Mike was signed up to attend the BLRC/CLUA luncheon, but he knew there would be no ALD transmitter, so he had a bacon-cheese burger at the restaurant instead, telling King he really didn't want those French fries.

Alice attended the three-hour session titled
"Access and Advocacy."
Its co-moderators were
Steven Mendelsohn and
Jeff Thom. This included a
series of speakers on

three different topics. The first presentation, titled "Integrating Access and **Functional Needs: We Fail** or Succeed Together," was given by B. L. Vance Taylor, who is Chief Office of Access and Functional Needs, California Governor's Office of **Emergency Services. He** talked about the essential steps individuals with disabilities need to take to prepare for emergencies. He cited many examples of issues that occurred during the fires of 2017. His advice was that every household should assemble a "go-bag" packed with essentials, and every person in the household needs to know where the bag is stored. He suggests a closet near the front door. There

should be a plan in place for all family members to meet at a designated spot in case of a fire or disaster, for example at the Smith's mailbox one block away. The speaker uses a wheel chair, and he shared the steps he takes so all members of his household have a job to do when evacuating and they practice the drill. To prepare for emergencies, he suggested the CA **Emergency Preparedness** website as a place to find tips and tools targeted to individuals with disabilities. The link to put into your browser is: www.caloes.ca.gov/Acces sFunctionalNeedsSite/Pag es/AFN%20Library.aspx. Another tool he mentioned is an app targeted to specific counties, which

sends out alerts in the event of an emergency or disaster. For Santa Clara County, the app is called ReadySCC.

Then the attendees heard from Fred Nisen and Paul Spenser, attorneys from **Disability Rights** California's Voting Rights Unit. They discussed the state and federal requirements for accessible voting. They reviewed the changes in specific counties for voting independently at home using your computer. The process is not perfect yet, as several people in the room were beta testers; and there are challenges with printing the ballot, which needs to be signed and mailed by the voter. Individuals are encouraged to contact the presenters if they experience difficulties in voting.

Lastly, Michelle Iorio, Staff Attorney, of Disability Rights Advocates, presented what their law firm is doing in regards to accessibility of websites. She discussed the process they need to follow in order to take legal action when a website does not provide equal access to information, and shared how the courts are ruling.

When this meeting is posted on our CCB website, it will be a good one to listen to if you are interested in these three topics.

International Luncheon

Maile writes: Susan Glass spoke about the partnership between the national park system, University of Hawaii, and ACB, that is a gigantic project involving access and audio described materials for every national park in California. Luncheon attendees learned about the experiences of the Fresno chapter members who provided input on this project at the Yosemite National Park. We were encouraged to contact Susan Glass to find out more about our National Parks and about how we might be able to participate in the expansion of this wonderful project!

First General Session

SVCB writes: ALD was available at the first general session, and Mike celebrated with King, who barked during the Pledge of allegiance "I couldn't help it, too happy!" [And now he says to be serious!]

Maile writes: President
Judy Wilkinson opened by
recognizing convention
sponsors. She thanked the
streaming team for making
the convention accessible
through ACB Radio: John
Glass, Gabe Griffith, Ken
Metz and Rob Turner, plus
Brooks and Ronnie: sound
people.

Peter Pardini gave an inspirational invocation, and the Cordova High School JROTC did a

presentation of the colors (our flags), followed by Louis Fawcett leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Frank Welte, serving as the Nominations
Committee chair,
complimented committee members on how orderly and fun the nominations meeting was. The slate was announced:

President: Judy

Wilkinson; 1st Vice

President: Gabe Griffith;

Treasurer: Lisa Presley-

Thomas; Directors: Frank Welte, Sharlene Ornelas,

Penny Valdevinos, and

Rob Turner.

Rancho Cordova Mayor Linda Budge was introduced, and she presented Judy with the key to the city. She welcomed CCB and commended our organization for bringing activities in which the entire community could participate, including the art exhibit and Dining in the Dark.

From sponsor Wells Fargo: Kathleen Martinez reported that since the end of 2017, she's been leading the Well's **Enterprise Accessibility Program Office, which is** focused on making products and services accessible, awarding scholarships, and recruiting employees with disabilities. Contact her about any of these programs at kathleen.martinez@wellsfa rgo.com.

President's Report: Judy reported on some of the disappointments from the

past year and explained that she and CCB learned from these mistakes. She quickly went on to what we should all be proud of: Nicole Pacheco was hired, bylaws committee has spent hundreds of hours revising the to-be adopted Bylaws; RBGG helped in the success of the vote by Mail settlement: abolished the Guide Dog board (thanks primarily to Jeff Thom and Margie Donovan); created the first draft of our Case for Support; updated CCB Internet site--it now has an online version of the Scholarship application and CCB survey; ZoomCloud technology will soon be used for meetings; the Seated Treadmill project should be expanded despite a

setback; convention sponsors are up 50%; the number of convention registrations are up; Dining in the Dark was a success; opened our **Southern California office;** plans are already being made for next year's convention: CCB's 85th anniversary—ACB **President Kim Charlson** has been invited as our guest. Judy thanked Paul Shane, Nicole Pacheco, the CCB board and the committees, and closed with a final huge thank you to her husband, Steven Mendelsohn!

Update from the BTBL:
Speaker Mike Marlin, who
just celebrated his tenth
work anniversary, opened
by joking that he works for
the American Library
Association, and that his

Guide Dog Vivaldi works for the American Labradorian Association! He went on to say that Vivaldi's title at work is Canine Librarian!

Technological Innovations (possibility of NLS circulating refreshable Braille displays); next generation talking book players featuring wireless delivery. (The U.K has a unique player called In Your Pocket, voice-activated and similar to Amazon's Echo/Alexa.) For a demonstration, Mike encouraged us to do a Google search.

Library Services: NLS is focusing on getting books to us quickly without having to rely so heavily on the postal service; the Patron Centric Cartridge Program will enable a

library to put multiple books on a single customized cartridge for an individual patron with a 2 to 3 month loan period. Because the library invested time and money converting many of the Recorded Cassette titles, Contact the Braille Institute Library if interested in participating in the pilot.

The Descriptive video service now has over 500 movies available to borrow.

Bookshare: The institute for museums and library services provided a grant to do a two year pilot for Bookshare. They currently have 280 of the 325 seats filled, so if you want to have the \$50 annual Bookshare fee waived, contact your library about

this pilot. The purpose is to make as many opportunities for reading books available to people with print disabilities as possible.

The Patron Advisory
Council is always looking
for new members. Mike
recognized Warren
Cushman who represents
CCB on this council. If
interested, visit the patron
advisory council
application at
www.library.ca.gov/btbl/ad
visory-council.

Dear Appropriator Letter writing campaign:
President Trump has proposed complete elimination of federal library funding in 2019.
Mike encouraged each of us to write to the Senate appropriations committee about why libraries are

important. For more information, contact Mike or check out www.ala.org/advocacy/fun d-libraries.

The Marrakesh Treaty was signed in 2013 as part of the World Intellectual **Property Organization with** the United Nations. It allows for cross-border sharing of books and magazines in alternative formats in countries with copyright exception laws. Though Dianne Feinstein and Kamala Harris are in favor, Mike encouraged us to contact our Senators and tell them why the Marrakesh Treaty is important.

If you have any other questions about what Mike talked about, and there was a lot, contact him at

Mike.marlin@library.ca.go v.

Major Gifts Ramp-up:
Louis Fawcett began by
saying he loves California,
especially the wine
country! He grew up in
Virginia and served for
eleven years as a Lutheran
pastor. He now lives in
South Carolina and works
for the National
Organization of Non-Profit
Organizations and
executives.

The Major Gifts Ramp Up model will fund our work for the next three years and consists of thirteen steps, starting with step one that will insure that donors are a priority in the mission of CCB. The remaining steps focus on identifying talent amongst key leaders; developing a Case for Support

(describes our mission in an inspirational way in 60 seconds or less); identifying Prospects through Donorscope, which is a list of names and addresses of wealthy households; planning an awareness event, we will invite 2,500 households and prominent members of the community, plus CCB leaders, to an inspirational lunch event. According to Mr. Fawcett, about 125 will attend: 80 will feel inspired enough for us to ask for money, and 40 to 50 will say yes; then visiting these 40 to 50 households and listening and learning about their concerns and goals; in the spring, hosting a signature event like Dining in the Dark—likely to overlap with the

convention; seeking a campaign cabinet consisting of 15 prominent individuals who will be involved in asking for major gifts for the operational needs of the organization—a one-time contribution to cover CCB through the next three years; and, finally, celebrating the success of the campaign and the impact it had.

Mr. Fawcett candidly reported that the success rate of the organizations he's worked with has been one third have never been able to get it going; a third raise more money than they've ever raised before, but they don't reach their goal—usually because they get caught up somewhere in the model or they fail to follow-up

with all the donors; and a third work all the way through the model and reach their goal. They do the hard work that needs to be done.

Note: A major gift is \$10,000 or more. These gifts will not be secured through fundraisers on social media; golf tournaments; or bingo games or bake sales, which are all a lot of work for not very much money and they don't build long-term relationships like this major gift campaign does.

Uber: Austin Heyworth
Manages California policy
for Uber. He lives in
Sacramento and grew up
in Los Angeles. He
assured us that the
company listens to
feedback from customers
and continues to focus on

ways to make the service better and more accessible.

All drivers must acknowledge quarterly that they understand their ADA responsibilities, including not denying passengers who are accompanied by their service animals. He encouraged us to use their complaint process if we are denied service. When we rate a driver a level three or less several times, the driver will be suspended and we won't ever be matched with that driver again. Interesting fact: There are over 100,000 Uber drivers in the state of California. He closed by saying that Uber's goal is to treat each and every customer with dignity. Contact Austin at

heyworth@uber.com.

Legislator of the Year Award: Jeff Thom, Legislative and **Governmental Affairs** Chair related a story about the abolition of the Guide Dog Board and how **Assemblyman Evan Low** (San Jose, Saratoga, **Campbell and Cupertino)** helped to make it happen, even though we rarely see the abolition of a state board. Because of his leadership and his willingness to listen and do the right thing for the community, we awarded **Assemblyman Low the CCB Legislator of the Year** Award (The plaque was read and accepted by Robert Sumner, Principal Consultant from the **Assembly Business & Professions Committee.)**

Jeff also noted that Assemblyman Low has been a supporter of our right to vote privately and independently.

Leadership Dinner and Second General Session

SVCB writes: O boy! There was working ALD at the Leadership Dinner sponsored by Vanda pharmaceuticals. Eric Bridges from ACB discussed his work in making everything accessible to visually impaired people, work that takes him around the world.

At the second general session, Jeff Thom presented his Governmental Affairs Report, which featured the Guide Dog Board sunset

plus several happenings in 2018.

Elections were held. Judy
Wilkinson remains CCB
President, Gabe Griffith is
now First Vice President,
and Ken Metz was elected
to complete the term for
Second Vice President.
Lisa Presley-Thomas was
elected as Treasurer, and
for directors, our own Rob
Turner kept his seat for a
second term, in addition to
Frank Welte, Sharlene
Ornelas, and Paul Pache.

The Board Breakfast

Mike was supposed to cover the Board Breakfast, but alas, there was no ALD transmitter! He left and calmed down with a Chai Late at Starbucks, a nice, "quiet" place. But here's Maile's description:
Minutes were read and

approved; a short
Treasurers report was
given and accepted. There
were committee updates
and public comments from
those members who
attended this meeting.

Saturday

SVCB writes: Saturday is a busy day for Alice, due to the series of events associated with Golden State Guide Dog Handlers, Inc. During the business meeting, Maile George was elected new Vice President, Vita Zavoli was re-elected as Treasurer, and the group welcomed William Elliot as a new Director. This was followed by a program titled, "Helping Our **Guides Overcome** Trauma," a panel discussion led by the five

guide dog school reps.

The Guide Dog luncheon is always fun, even though Mike does not have a dog (and there were a few others who didn't, either). Mark Hines, an international representative from Kong, in California, told us about the fun history of Kong, and how the toys are used worldwide with many animal populations.

Second General Session

The main feature of the second general session was the formal adaptation of CCB's new Bylaws, the replacement document for the Constitution, which had become unwieldy. The Bylaws were not accepted by the narrowest margin. The lively discussion

indicated that some members were not comfortable with voting on the bylaws without viewing the corresponding policy statements. This work will continue during the year ahead.

And Now, the Banquet, Sponsored by Uber!

It was MC'ed by President Wilkinson, and she started with three "desserts" before Mike ate his. (It reminded him of how he and Star would go to Baskin Robins and Hot Fudge Sundaes for dinner after a heavy lunch.) There was the Sacramento Banjo Band with music from the turn of the 20th Century. Tommy Edison, a blind motivational speaker (who is not related to Thomas

Edison) regaled the assembled for over 45 minutes with descriptions of his rollicking lifestyle, and Mike realized he was the persuasive MC at Dining in the Dark.

Vivian Younger, chair of the CCB Membership Committee, presented the Chapter of the Year award to the Redwood Empire chapter for the best chapter project in 2017. Unfortunately, her presentation was marred by sound difficulties. She said that the other membership awards would appear in the Blind Californian. There were other awards, plus raffle winnings.

Fourth General Session

Maile writes:

Remembrance of CCB colleagues who passed during the previous year.

Treasurer's report was accepted after being read aloud.

Jeff Thom then read the ten proposed resolutions for 2018, which are briefly summarized here.

01, Advocacy Resources: Calls for CCB to investigate finding a likeminded organization to share the cost of a legislative affairs person.

02, DOR Accessible
Documents: Calls on the
Department of
Rehabilitation to provide
all documents in
accessible formats.

O3, State Price Schedule:
Calls on the Department of
Rehabilitation to work
together with consumers
and providers of
accessible technology
goods and services to
determine what changes,
if any, need to be made in
how assistive technology
goods and services are
purchased.

04, Paratransit: Calls for a state wide task force made up of legislators, paratransit funders, providers, and consumers to discuss issues such as transfer rides, pickup times, door to door service, and other issues arising from limited resources.

05, Polling Booth: Calls for the California Secretary of State to insure all voter verification systems and polling kiosks are accessible to persons who are blind or have low vision.

O6, Accessible
Prescription Labeling:
Calls for state legislation
requiring prescription
labels and safety
information to be provided
in accessible formats.

07, Rehab Purchases of Over \$5,000: Urges that the Secretary of Education examine those purchases made by the Department of Rehabilitation in the amount of \$5,000 or more.

08, DMV: Calls on DMV to ensure that all field offices are aware that there is an exception to state law allowing DMV employees to assist a person who is blind or has low vision to fill out forms.

09, Physical Access: Deals with physical access with curb ramps and other barriers and affirms that the CCB will continue advocating for accessibility. It also will involve the CCB committee on access and transportation taking the lead in this advocacy effort.

10, Electronic Visit
Verification: Concerns the
accessibility and privacy
of verifying IHSS workers'
hours and tasks.

The proposed resolutions were passed by the membership. In addition, the hotel was commended for the high quality of its services, and the volunteers were joyously praised.

In closing, I can't compliment both the staff of the Marriott and the volunteers for this convention enough! They were absolutely wonderful; they were friendly, knowledgeable and patient! The Obie Shoeman Exhibit Hall was open on Friday and Saturday. Guide dog handlers could exit or enter the hotel's relief area 24 hours through a door in the Santa Rosa room. We could exit through other doors, but they were locked in the evening. The good thing was that if they were locked, our room keycards could be used to access the hotel.

California Parks Project Update

By Susan Glass

In the Winter 2018 issue of the BC, Jamie Gibson-Barrowss published an article about visiting **Yosemite National Park** along with several other members of the Fresno and Yosemite Gateway chapters of CCB. What made their visit unique was the park's audio described UniD brochure and accompanying ranger lead tour. Jamie and her companions were some of the first to enjoy an opportunity that will soon be available to all blind and visually impaired Californians in any of the state's national parks. Four entities, (The University of Hawaii, The **American Council of the**

Blind, Google Corporation, and the California Parks Service) are collaborating on this accessibility effort. The project got started when Dr. Brett Oppegaard, Thomas Conway, and Megan Conway, (all from the University of Hawaii Mānoa College of Social Sciences) obtained a grant from Google for the purpose of creating audio described versions of park brochures for all national parks. The audio versions would be available as MP3 downloads, and also as UniD apps to be used on an iPhone. In cooperation with ACB and CCB, blind and visually impaired Californians are testing the UniD app in

California's national parks. The Fresno and Yosemite Gateway chapters were the first CCB groups to test the app in November of 2017. Then on Friday, April 27, 2018, the Silicon Valley and San Francisco chapters had the opportunity to try the app at Muir Woods National Monument. Here is installment 2 of our California parks experience.

Before proceeding further, I'd like to thank my colleague Noel Runyan for his excellent notes and collaboration on this article.

Nine members of the Silicon Valley chapter and seven members of the San Francisco chapter participated in the Muir Woods outing. We met at the Manzanita parking lot at the intersection of Highways 1 and 101 where we were greeted by Richard De La O— **Accessibility Program** Manager at the Golden **Gate National Recreation** Area (GGNRA), Thomas Conway—University of Hawaii Center on Disability Studies, and Michael Faw— Accessibility and Exhibits Specialists at the GGNRA. We loaded and tested two apps on our phones: the UniD app for the Muir Woods Park brochure, and the National Parks Service (NPS) Golden Gate app for descriptions of sites within Muir Woods Park itself. The NPS app utilizes Bluetooth signals to trigger points of interest descriptions as you walk

through the park.
Currently, wayside
description triggering
works only for Apple
phones, and not yet for
Android. It was necessary
to load our apps in
advance because there is
no cell phone access
within the park.

With phones now ready, we were shuttled into the park where we were greeted by Todd, an enthusiastic ranger who clearly loved his work, and the opportunity to introduce visually impaired visitors to the wonders of the park. Todd, Richard, Michael and Tom each shepherded a small group of us on a park walkabout. The formerly paved walking paths are being replaced with wooden sidewalks that

float above the ground to protect the delicate roots of the redwood trees. Near the park entrance is an incredible topographical map of Muir Woods with every trail, look-out point, stream, and road labeled in braille, and assigned its own texture. Frank Welte and other employees of the San Francisco Light House were consultants for developing this map, and it was fascinating to hear him describe how the map was first made in clay, and how leather, beads and other objects were used to create the various textures for what ultimately became a metal structure. I walked around and around it, exploring every looping, switchbackladen path. The park is huge, and the map

conveys its size and its meandering spread.

The weather that day was cool with partial sunlight, skittering clouds, and a companionable meandering stream to remind us that it seldom gets very warm in this redwood rain forest. One of my personal highlights was giving my San Francisco friend Linda Porelle a big hug as we stood together inside the burnt-out trunk of a redwood tree. Another highlight was exploring a braille labeled redwood tree ring that dated the tree's beginnings back to before the common era (BCE). Our walk was a collage experience as we moved between real time connections with each other and nature, and the

rich information provided by our phone apps. NPS wayside and site descriptions of artwork on plaques was wonderful, with color and motion of plants and animals included.

After lunch we met for an hour with park staff to provide feedback on usability of both apps. Our feedback was collected in written surveys, and will help fine tune the apps. Generally, we would advise folks to take time to listen to the Muir Woods wayside descriptions before visiting the park. They would also find the UniD app an interesting and accessible way to find out about all the California parks.

In closing, we express our appreciation to Michael

Faw, Richard De LaO,
Thomas Conway, and
Todd, as well as to sighted
volunteers and family
members who
accompanied us. We also
thank Dan Spoone, first
Vice President of ACB,
and Jo Lynn Bailey-Page,

ACB Grants Writer, who work tirelessly behind the scenes to support and promote the parks project. ACB provided each chapter \$250 to offset costs of the Muir Woods excursion. So onward to our next park.

Tributes to Ken Metz

[We've received many memorials to Ken Metz, who passed away on May 5, 2018. The following are two of these, and the rest will be published in the fall issue of the BC]

Mike Cole: Friends Who Are Part Of Us

Have you ever had a friend you only see now and then, and yet they are part of you? Ken Metz and I met in 1952 at Bell School

in Chicago. We were the only kids in our grade who brought our lunch to school, so we were separated from everyone else, banished to a side table in the cafeteria and we became friends.

The teacher who ran the cafeteria got everyone to be quiet by banging a milk bottle on the table. Yes in those days milk came in bottles small and large.

One day she banged so hard the bottle broke, chaos ensued, a whole bunch of blind, low vision and deaf kids loved it.

Bell School was for all three categories of sensory disabled kids. Ken and I weren't in the same class, indeed, with all the schooling we would have together, we never did find ourselves in the same class.

Ken had lived in Los
Angeles where I was
bound, so I remember
standing in my kitchen
talking on a wall phone,
remember those? We
talked about what I might
expect at Frances Blend in
Los Angeles. He had
already been there, knew
some of their traditions,
like that they brought a
Christmas tree in during

the holidays. He mentioned it to say it was a good school, I would like it. He was right about that. I think back on this conversation, we were really little kids. That we spoke on the phone was remarkable, that he told me things I could use was typical of the Ken we all have known, always helpful always full of good information.

Then came the first day of the school year at John Marshall High School in Los Angeles, probably 1962. Who was this big guy, new student, wearing a suit? Something familiar, I know this guy! And indeed I did. We finished high school.

We spent hours on the phone, now talking girls, now sports, now blind

world politics, now messing around with the phones themselves. Yes, we were at least marginally involved in what was called Phone Phreaking.

We lived a couple blocks from each other in Hollywood. Then he moved to the San Fernando Valley, and in those days you had to pretty much plan to sleep over, if you were going to hang out in to the evening.

Remembering, Ken made a deal with our beloved gym teacher in high school, he would climb the climbing rope to the top as the semester progressed, in our big urban high school of mostly sighted kids. He made it.

There he was working in the youth department at Braille Institute, I was at Los Angeles City College just up the street. We got together and had fun. We hung out with the same kids at Foundation for the Junior Blind. We went to camp, and we both went to UCLA. And when Ken, now about to be married moved to San Francisco. my wife and I stayed with him a couple nights until we found our first wonderful place in The City. The rumble of the street car going past Ken's house in San Francisco was thrilling to me. That street car, The L if memory serves, I couldn't wait to ride.

I had a guide Dog, he had several. At UCLA all the people and dogs had fun, and yes, we did turn them loose in the library, hey, we were maybe 19 or 20. And I remember he would play instruments and sing corny songs, not to drive the rest of us young people crazy, well maybe a little bit to drive us crazy, but because Ken was an enthusiastic guy. When he was in college, Ken typed for sighted kids, he was a very fast and accurate typist; he worked and worked, always thinking of ways to make a few dollars. He worked in sales, never much fun, but he did Telemarketing, if he got you to make an appointment with Mathews TV, "Top Of The Hill Daily City," he got paid a little. And he got in to a pyramid scheme selling an allpurpose cleaner called

Haste. Oh we teased him, but gently. You know why? Simple respect, he was a blind person who was by God not going to be without money coming in. And he worked for the Phone Company, personnel you know. There he learned valuable lessons about proper reporting, which he took to his Lions Board membership, keeping an eye on personnel policy that proved to be excellent oversight. And he was a **Rehabilitation Counselor** and eventually the director of the DPI program, a contract with the Department of Rehabilitation. He left when he developed heart problems. And he had health concerns, but he always had energy for one

more commitment, for one more meeting, for one more kind word.

He introduced me to Ralph Rock, the Telephone Pioneer who got Beep Ball going, one pitch, Ken broke his thumb.

Our friendship with Ken continued. We were Rehab colleagues, and in the last 20 years we were separated, with him living in Los Angeles and my wife and I living in Berkeley. He headed the **DPI program at Junior** Blind, I was at the **Orientation Center for the** Blind, we talked, commiserated, kept in touch. From being kids together, here we were supervising important programs in our state, like a couple of real grownups with rather important jobs.

We traveled together with canes and dogs, we laughed and kidded and always got along. Ken was such a talented guy you know, musical, funny with very corny jokes. He debated in high school, sometimes adopting a persona, playing a roll, he always won. At least, that's how I remember it. We were the kind of friends who didn't have to catch up, like family, whenever we spoke, we knew what we needed to know about each other's lives, we could jump in to our interaction without need of background.

I saw Ken as a great model for us as blind people. He always worked, and he filled his time with civic activities. He was a Lion, he volunteered at our San Francisco Broadcast
Services running a talk
show. He was often the
sound man at
conventions, and lately
many of us enjoyed his
humorous congeniality
hosting Tech Talk.

Two people growing up with California's blindness politics, we looked after each other. It's called having your back, well there were times when a word, a warning, an ever so slight indication, I could trust his judgment, and I think he could trust mine. Ken was my friend, and I know I was his friend. We knew our families, we went through some hard times and great happy times. That I will miss him, just knowing he was there, speaks volumes about how as we

get older we must remember that our friends are assets better than riches. Hearing a familiar friendly voice at just the right moment is better than almost anything. My heart goes out to Pam and Ken's children. He was a big man, someone who often did his best work behind the scenes, and those of us who knew him experienced his humanity and his love. Ken Metz was a great man who gave of himself with enthusiasm and kindness. His loss is a hard one for a great many of us. Farewell old friend. You have done more than your share.

Rob Turner

My first memory of Ken goes way back to 1966. I was fourteen, my voice was just beginning to change, and I was still a bit shy. Ken would have been eighteen or nineteen. Back then the Foundation for the Junior Blind offered classes and entertainment for blind youth. Many of you will remember its founder Norm Kaplan. His favorite slogan was "it's nice to be nice," which was immortalized in his voice in the movie Mask.

The drivers who transported us to and from events may have been paid. However, I believe that some were volunteers because one Saturday morning the actress Anne

Hathaway, Mr. Drysdale's secretary on the Beverly Hillbillies, picked me up. I doubt that she was driving for pay. Anyway, the first time I met Ken was on a return trip home from the Foundation. On this occasion, the driver was a young lady with a very sexy voice. Ken blew me away when he boldly asked her out. I thought "hey, this guy's cool." Rumor has it that Ken was somewhat of a flirt. This little story of mine does nothing to dispel that rumor. Ken my friend, we're sure going to miss you.

CCB Membership Committee: Growth Awards Update

By Vivian Younger, Membership Committee Chair

Since we were unable to obtain reliable chapter/affiliate membership information for the year 2017, we have determined that for reasons of transparency, accuracy and fairness, the growth awards for 2018 will not be established in 2018. Just as some of you may be disappointed to hear this news, I am equally disheartened that these awards will not be presented to chapters/affiliates at this time. The CCB **Membership Committee is** already looking forward to presenting the membership growth

awards at the 2019 CCB conference and convention.

First Timer's Seminar

During the First-Timers seminar at the 2018 convention, CCB membership committee panelists informed participants about CCB history, structure of the organization, differences between the 2 largest national (ACB and NFB) consumer organizations of the blind, benefits/obligations of chapter membership, comparisons and contrasts between the **American Council of the**

Blind and the California
Council of the Blind
conventions, benefits of
being an at large member,
and how to get the most
out of a CCB Convention.
Throughout the seminar,
members shared how CCB
has impacted their lives
and how mentorships has
helped new members
learn how to cope with

their vision loss journeys. In addition to learning about the CCB organization, seminar participants enjoyed sharing jokes and getting to know each other.

During future telephonic calls, the CCB
Membership Committee hopes that many of you will be able to participate.

California Council of the Blind Officers and Directors

July 1, 2017

[Editor's note: We are indebted to Donna Sanchez, who updates and corrects the list of CCB officers and Directors, including the number of the term each is presently serving, the year elected to that term, and the year next up for election. Terms begin on July 1 following election. The presence of an asterisk means that the individual served a partial term before the first full term.]

Officers

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

1st Vice President: Frank Welte (16-18, 1st term), San Leandro, 510-541-1442 c, frank.welte@ccbnet.org

2nd Vice President: Gabe Griffith (*17-19, 1st term), Concord, 925-768-8195, gabe.griffith@ccbnet.org

Secretary: Ardis Bazyn (17-19, 2nd term), Burbank, 818-238-9321 h, ardis.bazyn@ccbnet.org

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

Immediate Past President: Jeff Thom (16-??), Sacramento, 916-995-3967 c, jeff.thom@ccbnet.org

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Gail Crossen (16-18, 1st term), La Habra, 562-691-3391 h, gail.crossen@ccbnet.org

Sarah Harris (17-19, 1st term), Fresno, 559-816-1507 h, sarah.harris@ccbnet.org

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Karen Shrawder (17-19, 1st term), Sacramento, 760-604-3735 c, karen.schrawder@ccbnet.org

Rob Turner! (16-18, 1st term), Sunnyvale, 408-203-9300 c, rob.turner@ccbnet.org

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Bonnie Rennie

Donna Sanchez

Dr. Catherine Schmitt Whitaker

If you or a friend would like to remember the California Council of the Blind in your Will, you can do so by employing the following language: "I give, devise, and bequeath unto the California Council of the Blind, a nonprofit charitable organization in California, the sum of \$____ (or ____) to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons."

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Executive Office for other suggested forms. Thank you.