



THE BRAILLE MONITOR

Voice of the
National Federation of the Blind

DECEMBER - 1971

The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind-it is the blind speaking for themselves.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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If you or a friend wish to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia non-profit corporation, the sum of \$ ____ (or, "____ percent of my net estate", or "the following stocks and bonds: ____") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons and to be held and administered by direction of its Executive Committee."

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

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR
DECEMBER 1971

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NFB CHRISTMAS RECORD--SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

SPECIAL NFB RADIO PROGRAM

The National Federation of the Blind will be heard on radio this year as a special Christmas feature. By the time this edition of *The Monitor* reaches you, all the radio stations in the United States (both AM and FM) will have received a record containing a fifty-four minute radio program, which we are asking that they play as part of their Christmas programming on either Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or as close as possible to Christmas.

To make sure that as many stations as possible carry this program, we are asking each chapter to contact its local stations--all of them--and urge them to schedule the program. If they have lost the record, have not received it or claim they don't know about it, we can ship you another copy. If it is necessary, write or call for it soon. It is a good show. We think you'll be proud to hear it on the air in your area.

The following is a letter which will go out with the records to the stations:

Dear Program Director:

Enclosed you will find a special fifty-four minute Christmas program of song and story, produced by the National Federation of the Blind as a public service. Please audition our program to see how it might fit into your Christmas programming.

The music consists of many familiar Christmas carols and some new and refreshing material, all covered by your station music licenses, plus several readings including "Twas the Night before Christmas," "The Gift of the Magi," and the Christmas story as told in the Gospel of St. Luke.

Actual program time is 54:01, to fit with local five-minute news programming. The first side ends with an instrumental version of "Good Christian Men Rejoice" and the second begins with a music box arrangement of "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing" for a smooth transition between sides should a station break be necessary to flip the record.

Thank you for your consideration. We feel that this National Federation of the Blind Christmas Music and Story program will be a bright addition to your public service programming. We would appreciate any comments you might have to make on the program.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind

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NFB CONVENTION BULLETIN

It is that time of the year again--time to plan for next summer's NFB Convention! Each Convention has been getting bigger and better, and Chicago in 1972 will be no exception. As you know, in Houston this year we had 968 at the banquet and over 1400 people attended the sessions. Illinois will have to work hard to do better, but we are sure they will. Read the following and you will see why:

The Convention will be held in Chicago, Illinois, at the Palmer House Hotel during the first part of July. Most of the delegates will probably arrive on Saturday, July 1, or Sunday, July 2. Registration will begin on Sunday morning. The Executive Committee meeting (open to all) will occur on Monday morning at which all States should be represented. In fact, Monday should be regarded as a full-fledged business day of the Convention, and the various division and committee meetings should be attended by all.

The first general business session will begin on Tuesday morning, July 4. The banquet will occur on Thursday evening, July 6, and tours will occur Wednesday afternoon, July 5. The Convention will adjourn at 5:00 p.m. on Friday afternoon, July 7.

HOTEL

The Palmer House is one of the best we have ever had. Its rooms are spacious, and its air-conditioning is flawless. It has a swimming pool and a sun deck. It has several fine restaurants, including a Trader Vic's--which, as all connoisseurs know, is unequalled for Polynesian food. The

meeting hall and committee rooms are magnificent, judged by any standards. We have never had better accommodations. Even so, the rates are extremely attractive. Single rooms will be \$8.00, and doubles and twins will be \$12.00. Rollaway for a third person in a room will be \$5.00.

BANQUET

The banquet will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday evening, July 6, and the menu will be good. The Palmer House is famous for its excellent cuisine. This will be a memorable occasion.

TOURS

As veteran NFB Convention goers know, one afternoon is always set aside for a tour to a place of interest in the vicinity of the Convention City. Final arrangements have not been made, however, it would appear that in 1972 several choices will be offered: there will be a tour of the Hadley Correspondence School for the Blind in Winnetka; a tour of the Chicago Lighthouse and the Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute; a tour of the Museum of Science and Industry; and an activity of a recreational nature. Also, the Illinois people are planning a special event for the hospitality room for Wednesday evening.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Again in 1972 there will be door prizes galore. Don't be late for the sessions, and don't leave the meeting room. The prizes will be worth winning. Here is a reminder to State and local affiliates: We ask that you please help us by securing as many worthwhile door prizes as possible for the drawings. We

again recommend that door prizes be worth twenty-five dollars or more. You will recall that at Houston many of the door prizes were worth quite a bit more, such as tape recorders, typewriters, and a magnificent chiming clock. Then there were those \$100 bills at the start of each morning session and at the banquet. It is a good idea to get started now. All door prizes should be sent to Mrs. Camille Myers, 1790-D West Estes, Chicago 60626.

Chicago is an interesting city, unexcelled as a convention site. Not only is it the home of two major league baseball teams but it has some of the world's finest stores and restaurants, and the friendliest people you will ever meet.

Please do not wait to write for your hotel reservations. We always have problems because so many of our delegates do not make reservations until late in the spring. It will be our greatest Convention. Get those reservations in now!

* * * * *

VICTORY IN KEENER CASE: FCC CHANGES RULES

by
Kenneth Jernigan

I am delighted to report to you that we have achieved victory in the *Mary Jane Keener* case. As you will see from the decision set out below, the Federal Communications Commission has changed its rules, and the blind may now take the tests for First Class Radio Operators License. This is a direct result of the court case instituted by the National Federation of the Blind earlier this year in behalf of Mary Jane Keener. (See *The Braille*

Monitor for August 1971).

It is true that the FCC still gives evidence that it is the victim of the ancient stereotypes about blindness. The rules as rewritten speak of those "afflicted" by blindness. It is also true that the First Class Radio Operators License issued to the blind person will carry an objectionable endorsement. However, this does not alter the fact that the victory has been won and that it results from NFB action. We must not lose sight of this fact.

The FCC recognizes that the question of safety is a matter to be settled between the employer and the blind licensee, not by the FCC. It also recognizes the fact that blind persons can perform duties required of First Class License holders.

Mary Jane Keener will undoubtedly be taking the First Class Operator tests within the next few weeks. I am sure that she will pass. Further, I believe that she will find employment. This is one more evidence of the effective and constructive role which the NFB is playing in securing equal opportunities and rights for the blind.

In the meantime, all of us should study carefully the language used by the FCC in making its concessions. The ancient myths about blindness still have power. I am sure that I need not tell you that negotiations will be under way with the FCC to try to get the language of the rules altered and to try to eliminate the objectionable "endorsement" on the licenses of blind persons.

This is what Federationism is about, and the Keener case constitutes another indisputable illustration of the positive

nature and constructive force of the NFB. All of the barriers have not fallen, but the trend is unmistakable and the pattern for

the future is clear to read. With determination and vigorous effort we shall prevail.

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D. C. 20554

FCC 71-941
66697

In the Matter of)
Amendment of the Commission's)
Rules to Provide for the)
Issuance of Radiotelephone)
Licenses to Blind Persons)

DOCKET NO. 19182

REPORT and ORDER

Adopted: September 8, 1971;

Released: September 13, 1971

By the Commission: Commissioner Wells concurring in the result.

1. The Commission instituted this proceeding by a Notice of Inquiry and Notice of Proposed Rule Making, adopted March 24, 1971, (FCC 71-295 28 FCC 2d 130, 36 F.R. 65), to consider the possibility of amending its rules to permit sightless persons to qualify for higher class radiotelephone operator licenses.¹ The Commission's rules now provide for waiver of the written examination only with respect to the third class radiotelephone operators licenses. The time for filing comments was extended to June 21, 1971; reply comments to July 12, 1971. As indicated in the attached appendix, the rules are amended liberalizing the rights of sightless persons to qualify for all classes of radiotelephone operator permits.

2. As we stated in our Notice, the question of blind persons holding radiotelephone operator licenses is not new. Eyesight has been viewed generally as essential for the performance of most operator duties. So inherent was this concept that the rules required the examinations for original licenses to be written in longhand by the applicant in the English language.² Notwithstanding the written examination prerequisite, several of the Engineers-in-Charge at some of the district offices over the years did take it upon themselves to offer examinations to blind persons. The lack of uniformity and this *ad hoc* handling of the matter was officially resolved by Commission Order released June 23, 1967, (FCC 67-749, 8 FCC 2d 696) amending Section 13.5(c)(2) of the Rules³ affording waiver of the written examination requirement with respect to the radiotelephone third class operator license. It was recognized at that time that sufficient adaptations could be made to the radio equipment so as to permit a blind person to perform the operating duties with reasonable accuracy, but not so with respect to the more technically oriented maintenance

duties required of the higher degree of license holder.

3. Continued pressure on the part of concerned individuals and groups prompted the instant proceeding so that a more thorough examination of the entire matter could be made, more particularly in light of the present day technologies and uses of the appropriate class license. Upwards of 30 comments were received in all, the largest portion from blind persons and Governors' Committees on the Employment of the Handicapped, as well as several from individual licensees (operator and station) who have worked with or been exposed to blind operators. Virtually all of those commenting urged in essence: that blind persons be permitted an opportunity to take any examination for which they may qualify; the Commission to limit its concern solely to the question of whether applicant passed the necessary test, leaving any questions of restrictions with respect to fitness and/or eligibility for employment to the individual operator and employer, both of whom would be more attuned to the capabilities of the sightless licensee vis-a-vis the job requirements. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) did have some reservations.

4. The responding parties agree that the safety factor is of paramount importance. They contend however, that since the question of personal safety is just as much of concern to the blind individual as it is to the sighted--that the blind technician has no less regard for his life than has his sighted colleagues--the compatibility of the particular individual with the job requirements in any given instance should more appropriately be left to the discretion of the parties themselves who are in the best position to mutually evaluate the particular hazards of a given technical operation. They argue that the same should not be the subject of arbitrary and discriminatory limitations imposed by the Commission on sightless individuals restricting the class of license for which he may qualify.

5. The parties urge that, overall, all technical people whether handicapped or not, differ in their ability and safety habits. However, the blind person through the exercise of proper judgment and care, will in most situations make suitable accommodation for the lack of sight by developing aids to assist in the completion of a particular task as well as testing and utilizing new devices and techniques. The Utah State Board of Education contends for example, the availability of instrumentation which makes most, if not all, adjustments to commercial radio equipment feasible for the blind operator, and the existence of well designed equipment which permits adjustments to be made through small access holes, with properly insulated instruments, so that operators do not forage about amongst high voltage wires and components while the current is on. Mr. Robert W. Gunderson, a blind first class operator for upwards of 30 years, states that he earns his living in the radio and electronic industry for which these commerical licenses are necessary adjuncts, and has developed numerous auditory measuring instruments which provide aural signals with braille read-out which enables the blind engineer, technician, and service man to perform his duties. The concensus generally however, is that the only effective safety devices available for the protection of any and all operators are *care, common sense, and a thorough knowledge of the equipment being operated*.

6. It is pointed out further that blind operators have been building and maintaining

high-powered radio transmitters for decades in all phases of radio technology; that the blind amateurs work on and maintain their own transmitters, making adjustments on live circuits at their own discretion;⁴ that more than 500 blind persons now hold radio amateur licenses from the Commission with "hundreds" operating "HAM" stations involving lethal voltage equipment; that as a matter of fact, ordinary house current could likewise be "lethal". Under the circumstances, the limitations imposed in the commercial operator field appears to the interested parties to be unwarranted. The Commission is convinced by the position of Governors' Committees on the Employment of the Handicapped and blind persons, and hereinafter regards the matter of personal safety of operators to be a consideration of employment between employer and employee.

7. More important however, insofar as the sightless person is concerned, is the prestige and ancillary job opportunities associated with the higher class license. Mr. Gunderson states that several of his major areas of employment would not have been available to him had he not been the holder of the higher class license. He would not, he contends, have been able to become an instructor for the United States Signal Corps Reserve in the 1940's had he not had the appropriate first and second class licenses, or had the opportunity to teach sighted applicants radio theory. In his view "lack of sight has nothing to do with technical ability." He points out that the passing of the appropriate examination indicates a mark of achievement--an honor bestowed upon the applicant evidencing that he is trained and disciplined to the extent demonstrated in the examination, and that the licensing agency should not withhold this right. Several others in their responses elaborate on this view. Mr. Sylvester N. Nemmers, a former first class license holder,⁵ notes for example, that the two-way communications field is closed "to technically qualified blind persons because at least a Second Class Radiotelephone License is required to maintain and repair transmitters of fixed or mobile stations." He alleges further that "certain electronics manufacturers or users require the employee to hold a particular operator license either for hiring or promotion." He urges therefore, that the blind persons be allowed to be examined and become qualified for all classes of commercial licenses in order that these avenues of job opportunities not be denied them.

8. The Committees and/or Commissions established essentially for the education and rehabilitation of the handicapped make the additional argument that the key to placing handicapped is selective placement--matching individual skills and physical limitations to job demands. Thus, they contend, to "arbitrarily" deny an individual the opportunity to secure the appropriate license is to limit automatically his participation and opportunity of achievement in his chosen field. The blind person does not seek nor must he be given sympathy. He must be allowed to be fairly competitive in attaining the maximum potential of vital importance. This, they urge, can only be accomplished by amending the rules to permit the licensing of the handicapped person who demonstrates by examination (orally, in writing or by braille) that he has the necessary knowledge of rules and technology set forth by the examination.

9. NAB in its comments strongly supports any and all efforts which extend employment opportunities to the handicapped, but nevertheless holds fast to the concept

that "it would be foolhardy to permit a sightless individual to either attempt or be legally qualified to maintain equipment under such conditions" where there is a single first class license holder responsible for the technical operation and maintenance of the directional station. NAB points out that the duties required to be performed will involve a multiplicity of functions, to wit, adjustment and maintenance of the antenna system requiring reading of precision instruments, extensive field measurements at remote locations, visual inspection of components for deterioration or overheating, plus a host of other operating parameters as well as maintenance functions involving voltages which could pose a definite hazard to one's personal safety.⁶ We appreciate NAB's concern, but do not believe the problem to be insurmountable. The stations are now free to enter into any employee-employer relationship which they deem proper and appropriate, and this free choice will continue to be theirs. The Commission is aware that granting higher grade operator licenses to sightless persons may create certain practical problems for broadcasters in that under many situations of transmitter and other equipment malfunction, the sightless operator may be handicapped vis-a-vis a sighted operator. It should be understood that, as at present, the Commission will hold the station licensee responsible for adaptation of the station's technical equipment to obtain compliance with the rules and for day-by-day operation of the station within the rules and the terms of the station authorization. The rule change will merely extend the blind person's opportunity to compete.

10. Several collateral issues remain for consideration. Section 13.5(c)(2) now requires that the license of the blind operator be endorsed to reflect the physical limitation by restricting the use of licenses in the Safety Radio Services and requiring any radio station employing blind operators to adapt their stations with the necessary equipment for operation by a blind person so that the station is capable of being operated in compliance with the Commission's rules. Several of the parties urge here that since the physical handicap is obvious at first glance no advantage exists to any such endorsement, save to act as a psychological disadvantage; that both parties appreciate the limitations and neither seeks trouble; that since the blind operator is fully aware of the existing hazards and would not want a job beyond his capabilities and the station would not be apt to make the offer to him for a job beyond his ability, any limitations or restraints placed on the face of the license are unnecessary and unwarranted. Mr. Morris Courtright, Jr., of Courtright Engineering, takes the extreme opposite view urging that all first class licenses (whether issued to sighted or sightless persons) should be identified and endorsed for those with maintenance knowledge and ability, giving full use and recognition for currently issued degrees and certificates of a technical nature in lieu of degrees of examination. The more moderate view recommends that the license issued to the blind applicant be limited with respect to the maintenance factor at least until such time as the station licensee determines that the sightless operator is able to perform the requisite duties without supervision, thus assuring that the facilities will be operated and maintained within FCC specifications. Sections 13.5(c)(1) and 13.5(c)(2) now require that these restrictive endorsements be placed on third class license documents obtained by sightless persons. This practice will be continued for sightless persons obtaining higher grade licenses.

11. On the basis of the comments herein together with available pertinent information,

the Commission is of the view that a most equitable conclusion, and one which would best serve the public interest, would be for the Commission to issue all grade of radiotelephone operator licenses to blind persons who qualify by taking the appropriate examination, subject to non-use in the Safety Radio Services and to the requirement that any transmitter operated by a blind person must be adapted by the station licensee for operation so that the station is capable of being operated in compliance with the Commission's rules.

12. We have examined further how best to conduct the examination to blind persons, and have concluded that the same is to be administered by a Commission employee at a Commission district office. Since the examination must be given orally, thus requiring a substantial period of time, the examinations will be conducted only pursuant to pre-arranged appointments made at least two weeks in advance of the examination date. In this way, the examinations will be conveniently spaced and timed and the normal functions of the district office minimally disrupted.

13. In view of the foregoing, IT IS ORDERED, that effective October 26, 1971, pursuant to the authority contained in Sections 4(1) and 303(1) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, Sections 0.314, 13.5(c)(2), 13.11 and 13.23 of the Commission's rules ARE AMENDED as set forth in the attached Appendix. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, That this proceeding is TERMINATED.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Ben F. Waple
Secretary

Attachment: Appendix

NOTE: Rules changes herein will be covered by T.S.V(70)-5.

APPENDIX

1. A new paragraph (r) is added to Section 0.314 to read as follows:

Section 0.314 Authority delegated to the Engineers in Charge.

* * * * *

(r) Request by blind applicant for appointment for a date and time within which to appear at the appropriate district office for a radiotelephone license examination. (Section 13.11 of this Chapter)

2. Section 13.5(c)(2) is amended to read as follows:

Section 13.5 Eligibility for new license.

* * * * *

(c) * * *

(2) If an applicant afflicted with blindness is afforded a waiver of the written examination requirement and is found qualified for a radiotelephone first-class operator license, radiotelephone second-class operator license, radiotelephone third-class operator license, and radiotelephone third-class operator license with broadcast endorsement, he may be issued the license: PROVIDED, That the license so received shall bear an endorsement as follows:

This license is not valid for the operation of any station licensed by the Commission unless the station has been adapted for operation by a blind person and the equipment to be used in such station for that purpose is capable of providing for operation in compliance with the Commission's rules.

* * * * *

3. A new paragraph (e) is added to section 13.11 to read as follows:

Section 13.11 Procedure.

* * * * *

(e) Blind Applicant. A blind person seeking an examination for radiotelephone first-class operator license, radiotelephone second-class operator license, radiotelephone third-class operator license, and radiotelephone third-class operator license with broadcast endorsement shall make a request in writing to the Engineer in Charge of the appropriate district office for a time and date to appear for such examination. The examination shall be administered only at the district office. Requests for examinations shall be made at least two weeks prior to the date on which the examination is desired.

4. Section 13.23, headnote and text is revised to read as follows:

Section 13.23 Examination Form.

The written examination shall be in English and shall be written by the applicant in longhand except in the case of a blind applicant, where the examination questions shall be read orally to the applicant and the dictated answers recorded by a Commission district office employee authorized to administer the examination orally.

1 Radiotelephone First Class and Radiotelephone Second Class. This rule making proceeding does not deal with the Radiotelegraph series of the licenses.

2 "Section 13.21 Form of Writing.

Written examination shall be in English and shall be written by the applicant in longhand in ink, except that diagrams may be in pencil."

3 Section 13.5(c)(2) reads as follows:

"(2) If an applicant afflicted with blindness is afforded a waiver of the written examination requirement and is found qualified for a radiotelephone third class operator permit, he may be issued the permit: *Provided*, That the license so received shall bear an endorsement as follows:

This license is not valid for the operation of any station licensed by the Commission unless the station has been adapted for operation by a blind person and the equipment to be used in such station for that purpose is capable of providing for operation in compliance with the Commission's rules."

- 4 The Commission field personnel state that in their experience many sightless amateur operators shut down a transmitter that is not operating properly and seek assistance from a sighted person.
- 5 Mr. Nemmers received his Radiotelephone First Class License in 1942. However, he permitted the same to lapse in 1957. The subsequent uniformity in the rules permitted him to qualify only for a third class permit.
- 6 NAB alleges in addition that the "anticipated adoption of the new license-holder concept and requirement as proposed in Docket No. 18930" (of which NAB is a foremost proponent) looking toward the amendment of Part 73 of the Rules and ultimate relaxation of the requirement to have first class operators on duty would create sufficient third class jobs and moot the instant proceeding. We do not believe NAB's arguments in this area to be appropriate for consideration in this proceeding, nor necessarily decisionally significant at this time.

* * * * *

AFB MAKES NO ANSWER

119 S. Main Street
Newtown, Connecticut 06470
August 31, 1971

M. Robert Barnett, Director
American Foundation for the Blind
15 W. 16th Street
New York, N. Y. 10011

Dear Mr. Barnett:

We were students together at the Seeing Eye in June-July, 1938. You trained with a dog named Katje, as I recall, and I trained with a brindle boxer named Madchen. Mr. Donaldson was our instructor. I now have my fourth Seeing Eye, a shepherd named Olga. When we trained together, I was already a teacher of

the blind, and you were a college student. I remember you particularly because I admired you so much for the fine adjustment you had made to blindness, following such a tragic loss of vision. I have been pleased to note your personal progress in positions in work for the blind at the American Foundation.

While attending the yearly Convention of the National Federation of the Blind in Houston this summer, I heard excerpts, with definite disbelief, from A STEP BY STEP GUIDE FOR PERSONAL MANAGEMENT FOR BLIND PERSONS. I learned that five years of work by members of agencies and organizations for the blind had gone into that publication. I simply had to seek my first opportunity to secure that book, bearing your endorsement, in cassette form.

It is well known that no one should sign any paper or document without reading it first. Could it possibly be that you read that publication before attaching your signature--a book that is most degrading to you and all other blind people? Do you consider yourself and all other blind persons as idiots? The American Foundation for the Blind is supported, I believe, through private contributions and possibly some government grants. Was some of this money, as well as funds from other agencies, spent to sponsor conferences in Chicago, New Orleans, and New York? I have been a subscriber to *The New Outlook for the Blind* for many years, and I gather that you are ready to publish in it adverse criticism, as well as praise. I very much doubt that you could possibly have the courage to publish this letter that I am now writing you.

If I were the parent of a blind child, the

implications of such a book concerning the intelligence of my youngster in comparison to other children, would surely have me ready for a mental institution. If I were a family member, faced with the sudden or gradual loss of sight of some other member of my family, this book would surely give me every indication that the newly blinded family member had surely lost every bit of mentality he or she had ever had. I would be ready to do nothing but treat the blinded person as mentally incapable of any selfcare, and would probably be quite ready to consign him to an institution for life. Could there possibly have been any blind persons on the Committee who worked to develop this publication? It just doesn't seem possible.

I read the book in its entirety because it was truly so unbelievable. I had several family members and friends--some of the friends were blind--listen to excerpts, but no one was able to take more than a very few minutes of such material, presented in such an idiotic manner. Can you possibly believe that any teacher of the blind, who loves the work and is truly interested, would gain anything from such a publication?

As to blind persons themselves, the very small blind child would need at least some "step by step" instruction, would not be capable of understanding, or even listening to such instruction, until he was too old to find any of it really useful. The newly-blind adolescent or adult, if presented with such a publication, would certainly believe that life was finished for him, that he had lost all his senses along with the loss of his vision. The personal background and the circumstances of each person's blindness are so very different.

Even with the intelligence which I believe you and I both have, we could not have been handled identically, and certainly you remember that at the Seeing Eye, where there are truly interested workers, we were dealt with as individuals.

Will you read A STEP BY STEP GUIDE FOR PERSONAL MANAGEMENT OF BLIND PERSONS? Then I wonder if you won't think that expenditures for this publication--both in time and in money--could have been better spent on truly improving conditions for workers in special workshops for the blind.

Most sincerely,

Mrs. Dorothy N. Campbell

P.S. Just a note of little consequence, but if you remember me at all, my name when we met at the Seeing Eye was Dorothy Nelson. As I mentioned, I was then a teacher (at the New York Institute). Later I married, and still later I operated a store, known as the Patients' Store, at Fairfield Hills Hospital (a Connecticut State Mental Hospital here in Newtown), and am now assistant to the Medical Librarian in the same Institution. I understand that this is a most unusual position for a blind person. I am the mother of a fine grown son who will be married two weeks from this coming Saturday. My son is a college graduate. I live alone, with a reasonable degree of independence, in a home which I myself own.

D.N.C.

* * * * *

WILLIAM DWYER DIES

by

Kenneth Jernigan

It is my sad duty to report to you the death of Bill Dwyer, president of the NFB of New York State and member of the Executive Committee of the National Federation of the Blind. Bill died on October 18 and was buried on Thursday, October 21. It is my understanding that his death was caused by emphysema.

I have known Bill for many years. He has always been a loyal and staunch Federationist, a true friend, and a fighter for his beliefs. He was never showy or over-dramatic, never demanding or self-seeking, but he was steady and persistent, determined to get the job done--and he usually did. He was one of the key figures in revitalizing and strengthening the New York affiliate after the turmoil of the late 50's and early 60's. In 1970 he was elected to the Executive Committee of the National Federation of the Blind. In that capacity he was true to form. He made solid contributions and could always be relied upon to do his part.

Bill Dwyer will be greatly missed. He was the colleague and peer of us all. I am sure that I speak for all of the organized blind of the nation in extending sympathy to Bill's family. We share their grief and sorrow.

* * * * *

NEW YORK CONVENTION

by

Bill Dwyer

Friday, September 3 found the

organized blind of New York State converging on the city of Albany where the Tri-City Council of the Blind hosted the sixteenth annual convention of the Empire State Association of the Blind. Activities got off to a flying start on that happy and hectic Labor Day week-end at the Sheraton Towne Motor Inn with an 8 p.m. meeting of the Executive Board, which among other things voted to accept two groups who had requested affiliation with the ESAB. At the same time in another part of the hotel, a hospitality room was in full swing for late arrivals wishing to partake of collation.

Registrations were taken Friday evening and Saturday morning until noon. Promptly at 10 a.m. on Saturday morning, the convention was called to order by the president. After the invocation by Bob Frey, of Syracuse, the Honorable Erastus Corning, Mayor of the city of Albany since 1940, welcomed the delegates to Albany.

The roll call showed ten chapters present, all the State officers plus the delegate at large. A comprehensive report of the 1971 Convention of the National Federation of the Blind was given by Sam Lentine. This was followed by the president's report on the state of the State.

As the theme of the convention was "Services and Rehabilitation," it was decided that Saturday would be for Services and Sunday for Rehabilitation. Saturday's program was bolstered with what could be referred to as "Who's Who in Services for the Blind." Our first speaker was John A. Baldwin, director of the New York State Commission for the Visually Handicapped. Mr. Baldwin in his

remarks made known to us a revision in the set aside levy which the ESAB had been working hard for during the past several years was about to take place and it would be retroactive to January 1, 1971. Mr. Baldwin noted that blind students in college in New York State have less than 5% drop-out, while among the national sighted students it is about 35%. Also Mr. Baldwin told of a first in employment in New York State for blind persons. There were two blind persons placed as employment interviewers in the Labor Department in New York City. Heretofore, no blind person had ever filled this position.

Continuing on the theme of services, Mr. Joseph W. Pike, executive director of the Albany Association of the Blind, reported on the services given by the private agency. Mr. Pike told of the new rehabilitation center in the AAB headquarters, and of the success they are having with the new program. His remarks on the needs and requirements of the blind were enthusiastically received.

To conclude the program, we heard from Mrs. Bettina H. Wolff, who is in charge of the regional library for the blind, accompanied by her assistant, Mrs. Elizabeth Claussen. Both ladies made notes on the wants of various members present. Anyone who has not had a response to his request by now is requested to send a message to the library, 226 Elm Street, Albany, New York. Mrs. Wolff advised those present that anytime they have need for a copy of any law simply write to the library, making known their desires and they will be furnished with a copy of the law. We also were informed that henceforth the cassettes furnished by the library will be players

and not recorders. Each of the speakers, following his opening remarks, had a question and answer period, which proved to be very informative and very productive.

On Sunday afternoon, we had a blue ribbon panel of experts on rehabilitation, including Donald W. Miller, senior counselor with RCS of the State Commission, Joseph K. Kirstein, director of the Rehabilitation Center of the Albany Association of the Blind, and Milton Goldstein, executive director of Workshop, Menands, New York. Moderator was Lawrence (Muzzy) Marcelino, San Francisco, Secretary of the National Federation of the Blind. Each of the panel members was given an opportunity to make a statement at the beginning of the program. It was then thrown open for questions. The panel members fielded all the questions, answered them fairly and honestly, told it how it is, with the result showing that having problems isn't all one-sided. There are problems on both sides. This gave us an opportunity to learn of theirs and they had an opportunity to hear ours. The exchange of ideas and thoughts proved very fruitful.

Acting on the old maxim "All work and no play, etc.,," the Tri-City Council arranged for busses to take the delegates who wished to the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Saratoga Springs, where Bill Cosby was making his last appearance as a comedian before entering college to become a school teacher. Mr. Cosby's humor was the required remedy to relieve the tension from the meetings of the convention.

For the benefit of vending stand

workers and those interested in going into vending stand work, a vending stand workshop was held on Sunday afternoon. Alex Samuels, chief of technical services for the blind, and Ed Sherry, supervisor of vending stand operations attended this workshop, and with their knowledge of the program, dispelled many of the false rumors that circulate throughout the stands, and told of the future plans for the stand operators. Everyone was gratified with the results of this workshop. It's a practice that will be continued at future conventions.

As at all conventions, committee reports were given by the various chairmen, resolutions were read, discussed, and passed. Of resolutions, one was to introduce legislation whereby the State would furnish information on all benefits available to the blind and physically handicapped. Another resolution instructed the officers to take the necessary steps to change our name to National Federation of the Blind of New York State. Another resolution set down guide lines whereby the chapters must attend certain meetings and comply with other regulations or forfeit their charter. A complete list of the resolutions will be made available to each chapter as soon as they are printed.

The highlight of the ESAB convention was Sunday evening when one hundred twenty members and friends gathered to partake of the banquet. It is believed that this is the largest number to attend an ESAB banquet. Professor Peter A. Roidl, past president of ESAB, was Master of Ceremonies at the banquet. He told some jokes about college professors and maybe they weren't jokes. They could have been facts. At this time, Bill Webb,

with his big box full of stubs, drew the winners' names so we could deliver three cash prizes to the lucky winners. Mrs. John Kirsch, a member of the Tri-City Council of the Blind, expertly hand-knitted a mohair cape stole, which she donated to the Tri-City Council with the request that it be given as a door prize at the banquet. The president then awarded three charters to affiliates. Mrs. Marcia Stein accepted the charter for the Concordia Chapter, Mrs. Pat Eisenhandler accepted the charter for the Metropolitan Federation of the Blind, and Bob Frey accepted the charter for the United Blind. Muzzy Marcelino wrapped things up with a stirring banquet address after which a five piece orchestra played music for dancing and listening. Most of it was listening because, in the meantime, the air conditioner had broken down, and dancing was just too much.

The following were elected to serve for the next two years: president, William S. Dwyer, Rensselaer; first vice-president, Mrs. Laura Herman, Niagara Falls; second vice-president, Dr. Edwin Lewinson, New York City; secretary, Miss Edythe Williams, Albany; treasurer, Mrs. Dorothea Vogel, Tonawanda. Through the efforts of Mike O'Brien, special publicity chairman for the convention, the convention was covered by two TV stations, one radio station and an Albany newspaper. The 1972 ESAB convention will be hosted by the Concordia Chapter in New York City, over the Labor Day Weekend.

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TRAVELING ALONE DEAF-BLIND
by
Pilar Afzelius

1369 Main Street
Reading, Massachusetts
September 1, 1971

Dr. Kenneth Jernigan
President
National Federation of the Blind
Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Dr. Jernigan,

I hope you have not forgotten me. I wrote to you late in 1969 inquiring about membership in the NFB. You referred me to the most efficient and active president of the ABM (Associated Blind of Massachusetts). Thanks very much for that. I joined the Greater Lawrence Chapter of the ABM early in 1970 and have been attending its meetings regularly. A very devoted volunteer who is chief librarian at Merrimack College in Andover takes me every month to the meetings in Lawrence. And in spite of my deafness, I know what is going on. A very dedicated member, William Kolenda, takes down Braille notes for me during the meetings. Last year, I attended the ABM's annual convention at the Parker House in Boston with the help of a friend. I am planning to attend the convention next month at the Schine Inn in Chicopee. I hope to meet you there. I also hope you have a means of communicating with me other than a handshake.

I am writing this letter to tell you about my recent trip to Germany. I know that the NFB opposes the proposal of travel concessions for the blind on airlines. That is, one ticket for two people traveling

on airplanes--the blind person and his guide. I certainly agree with the NFB. There is really no need for a guide, for a blind person traveling alone can obtain all the help he needs from ground crews at the airport and from flight crews on the airplanes themselves. I have proved this point very well during my recent trip to Germany. I traveled alone by plane on May 1 from New York to Luxemburg on an Iceland Airlines flight. I had absolutely no trouble in spite of my deafness. Everybody was so eager to communicate with me by means of writing on my palm. At the Luxemburg Airport I was met by Herr Leo Schuller, president of the Luxemburg Association of the Blind and his two sighted friends. Herr Heinz Keil, president of the German Association of the Blind had requested Herr Schuller to pick me up at the airport and take me to Hellenthal, a little mountain resort on the German Belgian border. The drive from Luxemburg to Hellenthal in Germany took only two hours. But we all enjoyed it. I can speak German quite well as I have been studying the language diligently for several years with the Hadley School for the Blind. I had absolutely no trouble with the language during my six weeks in Germany. In Hellenthal I attended a meeting of the German deaf-blind from May 3 to May 14. This meeting was sponsored by the German Association of the Blind (Deutscher Blindenverband) and the deaf-blind people there are members of this association. The German Association of the Blind is the German counterpart of our NFB. Its function and aims are the same as those of the NFB. There were forty deaf-blind people with their guides who came from all parts of Germany in Hellenthal. The meeting was held at a resort home for the blind there in the mountains which is owned by the

Nord Heine Association of the Blind which is an affiliate of the German Association of the Blind. These meetings of deaf-blind people are held in Germany every year in a different resort home for the blind. There are several of them scattered all over the country. I was able to join the meeting this year because I read about it in a German magazine for the deaf-blind and I wrote and asked if I could come there and join them. They were so eager for me to join them and they made all the arrangements including providing me with a guide to help me during the meeting. I was the first deaf-blind American who ever joined these meetings and they were all so happy that I had gone there. As soon as I arrived there I learned the Lormen manual Alphabet which is the method of communication of the deaf-blind in German speaking countries. On the first Wednesday there I met Herr Heinz Keil who had traveled there to address the deaf-blind group.

The meeting was just a reunion of deaf-blind people. It was just to renew friendship, to talk with old friends, to do things together such as taking long walks in the mountains, etc. We made several excursions by bus to the neighboring towns and places of interest.

The meeting came to an end on May 14. We all had enjoyed ourselves and we all came out from there with many cherished memories. On May 24th I traveled with a group of people from Hamburg by train and spent three more memorable weeks in Hamburg living with a private German family. I met more deaf-blind and blind people in Hamburg and even attended an excursion of the Hamburg Association of the Blind. I enjoyed it very much there.

On June 15th I started my long journey back home. I left the Hamburg Airport at 11 o'clock that morning and arrived at the East Boston Airport the next day at 2 p.m. I had to change planes at Frankfurt, Luxemburg, and New York. All the time I was traveling alone. Everybody was so nice to me and I arrived in Boston safe and well and in good spirits. So you see, a blind person does not really need a guide to travel abroad.

Hoping to meet you next month at the Schine Inn. The ABM has made arrangements for a guide for me at the convention.

Sincerely yours,

Pilar Afzelius

* * * * *

CALIFORNIA CONVENTION

"The California Council of the Blind shall henceforth be known as the National Federation of the Blind of California." This was the decision of the Council delegates in convention assembled at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel on the weekend of October 15, 16 and 17, 1971. The change was activated by a motion from the floor after a very informative convention-opening report on National Federation of the Blind activities given by NFB President Kenneth Jernigan. Subsequently, an amendment to the Council constitution was proposed which would change the name of the thirty-four year old California Council of the Blind to the National Federation of the Blind of California. The amendment was adopted on the following day, Sunday, October 17.

On Saturday evening two hundred twenty-seven (all that the banquet hall could accommodate) delegates, members, and friends attended the convention banquet. NFB President Jernigan was honored as the recipient of the Dr. Jacobus tenBroek Award for dedicated and outstanding service to the blind in which the philosophy and the standards espoused by our late and beloved Dr. Jacobus tenBroek are pursued. The presentation of the award was made by Mrs. Jacobus tenBroek. President Jernigan graciously accepted the award with comments referring to the legacy of teachings and leadership left to us by Dr. tenBroek.

Perry Sundquist, master of ceremonies, eloquently depicted the life and achievements of President Jernigan. President Jernigan followed this introduction with a provocative address. In his speech he outlined the history of programs affecting the blind. He correlated this history with the hopes and aspirations of the organized blind and whatever achievements there have been along the way. In a final analysis he stated that we have not come too far in changing public rehabilitation, public welfare or public opinion

Mrs. Vera H. Schiller, Western Field Representative of the National Center for the Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults, spoke on the program currently being implemented at this newly established center. She solicited assistance from the delegates in finding deaf-blind persons who might profit by attending the Center, and to whom we all could give personal assistance.

Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant spoke on the

progress and projects of the International Federation of the Blind, pointing especially to the "Miss-A-Meal" appeal for funds and to the overseas mailing of books, magazines and Braille writing supplies.

Carolyn Helmer, Director of the REAP program of our Active Blind Chapter, moderated a panel discussion on "Wider Horizons for the Senior Blind." NFB President, Kenneth Jernigan, Mrs. Alva Neely, geriatrics specialist with the Los Angeles Board of Education and Perry Sundquist, editor of *The Braille Monitor*, participated in the panel discussion which dealt with health care, education, recreation, income maintenance, housing, transportation and psychology in reference to blind senior citizens.

Ten resolutions were adopted by the convention dealing with current problems which need the attention of the organized blind. Among them was a resolution which may ultimately lead to a court suit by the organization against the State Department of Social Welfare for having phased out positions of responsibility in the administration of the State Aid to the Blind program, an action which is definitely in violation of State law.

The Employment Assistance Committee, under the chairmanship of Lynda Bardis, presented a progress report and requested the participation of Federation members in expanding the scope of the Committee and the services it hopes to render to blind persons.

Lynda Bardis and Perry Sundquist presented a legislative report outlining activities in Sacramento during the past months. With the Legislature still in

session and the bill to establish an Office of Services to the Blind still under consideration, there is high hope that we might still achieve a separate agency for the blind this year.

In accordance with the new constitution adopted last spring, three additional Executive Committee members were elected at this convention. They were Robert Acosta of Chatsworth, Michael Butler of Los Angeles, and Sid Urena of Sacramento.

Meetings were held by special interest groups, each of them dealing with problems related to current trends and developments in the specific areas. Among these were the California Industries for the Blind Workers, Blind Teachers, Medical Transcribers, and Blind Students.

An exciting feature was a demonstration in the swimming pool by the young scuba divers who were trained this past summer in Sweden through a project initiated by the Capitol Chapter of the CCB. Henry Negrete, president of that chapter, supervised the demonstrations on Friday and Saturday afternoons.

* * * * *

FEEL FOR NEWS
by
Jeff Bradley

[Reprinted by courtesy of the Associated Press.]

When you first watch Paul Caputo reading the news on the "Big News" over WWLP-TV, Springfield, Massachusetts, you wonder why he is wearing dark glasses.

If you watch carefully, you see his arms are moving back and forth and then realize--he is reading the news in Braille.

Blind since birth, Caputo, twenty-six, joined the station's news staff with a helping hand from modern technology and his seeing eye dog, Lupo.

"I have the feeling more people are watching me than are listening to me," the Westfield resident said, but viewers have accepted the newsman who has never been able to watch television himself.

All calls and letters received by the station congratulated it for taking the gamble.

Instead of a writing pad for note-taking, Caputo records telephone interviews on a pocket-size cassette recorder. For on-the-air material, he uses a Braille typewriter.

The 1969 graduate of American International College is an eleven-year ham radio operator and holds the top-rated amateur extra class license from the FCC. He was a disc jockey and engineer at his college FM station and is editor of the local county radio association journal.

Caputo telephoned WWLP owner William L. Putnam last November and asked if there were any openings.

"I didn't mention my visual status to him," Caputo said. "Needless to say, there wasn't much doubt about my status when I came up for an interview."

But Putnam was not put off by Caputo's blindness and promised him a try at a job in the news department.

It was contingent on developments at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, where a team was developing a high-speed Braille embossing machine, known as "Braillemboss" which can be connected to newswire teleprinters to produce instant wire service reports in Braille.

The machine was first demonstrated last year to the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, which asked MIT to build and install a "Braillemboss" at WWLP, the first tried for commercial use.

Caputo reads the Braille copy with one hand while finding the next line with the other, a smooth procedure that enables him to read two hundred words per minute.

His first time, "I couldn't read, I couldn't think, and I couldn't talk," he said.

"Then one day, Bill (Putnam) told me, 'You're going on the air tonight.' He was taking a hell of a chance on me."

Producer Warren Freedman remembers extensive precautions staff members made in case Caputo froze.

Caputo came across cool and calm, however, and has been on the air Tuesday and Thursday nights ever since.

"We give Paul no special treatment. In fact, if anything, we have to tranquilize him at times, he has so much drive and ambition to succeed," Freedman said.

Caputo gets rides to and from work. "I look forward to getting up and going to work each morning," he said, "because I

want to be the best newsman I can be."

On his days off, Caputo goes

horseback riding and plays country and western steel guitar professionally.

* * * * *

MEET OUR STATE PRESIDENT--JEFF BROWN AND OUR STATE AFFILIATE--OREGON

I was born in 1944 in a small Scandinavian community, Astoria, Oregon, located at the mouth of the Columbia River. This oldest American settlement west of the Mississippi was to be my home for some seventeen years. In the midst of my junior year in high school, I was totally blinded by an eye disease. After completing high school, I attended two consecutive workshops held on the Oregon State School for the Blind campus in Salem, Oregon. Being somewhat reluctant at the time to attend such workshops, I now realize the importance of acquiring communication and mobility skills and self-knowledge that were so necessary in terms of who and where I am now. From there I attended Willamette University, a small private college in Salem, Oregon, where upon graduation I received a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology. Further involvement in academics seemed somewhat meaningless, so experience as a dormitory counselor at the Oregon State School for the Blind was to be my teacher for the next four years. In 1970, I took a position as rehabilitation teacher with the Oregon State Commission for the Blind in Portland, Oregon, where I am presently employed.



The Oregon Federation received its initial beginning at an organizational meeting held in Portland in March of 1970. In its infancy, the OFB membership totalled some twenty members. To date, our membership includes five local chapters: Portland, Klamath Falls, Milton Freewater, Albany, and Eugene, with an active total membership of eighty persons.

OFB was organized to 1), improve the quality and quantity of services for the blind in Oregon; 2), combat discriminatory practices toward blind individuals on the part of employers and the general public; and, 3), in the process, to effect a meaningful change in regard to those attitudes which stand in the way of achieving security, equality, and opportunity. Another factor which motivated us into organizing an Oregon affiliate stemmed from the fact that there existed in Oregon an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind, which, for the most part, has been rather ineffective in meeting the needs of blind Oregonians.

In order to carry out our objectives we held a State-wide candy sale which netted our organization more than enough money to operate on through the coming

year.

Our organization's main objective was to block House Bill 1059, which, if passed, would have placed the Oregon State Commission for the Blind in an umbrella-type agency known as the Human Resources Department. Through active participation by our members and friends, along with the timely and inspirational appearance by President Jernigan at our first annual State convention, our organization brought about amendment of House Bill 1059, which now excludes the Oregon Commission from the Human Resources Department.

We are presently engaged in trying to secure for a Federationist a position on the Oregon State Commission Board, which is the administrative and policy-making body of the Oregon Commission.

In the future, the Oregon Federation of the Blind plans to concentrate its efforts on building its membership and laying substantial groundwork for introducing legislation in 1973 concerning reconstruction of the ineffective Oregon State Commission's Board of Directors and the passage of the White Cane Law.

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NORTH CAROLINA CONVENTION
by
Hazel Staley

The second annual convention of the Tar Heel State Federation of the Blind was held at the Barringer Inn in Charlotte, North Carolina, September 18-19, 1971. Happy, enthusiastic members began

arriving on Friday evening, the 17th.

The first session of the convention was called to order by President Clarence E. Collins at 9:30 Saturday morning. The invocation was delivered by Rev. J. H. Waugh, blind minister from Burlington, North Carolina. Mayor John Belk welcomed the convention to Charlotte.

Many well qualified speakers throughout the day brought much interesting information of an educational nature. Miss Myrtle Garris brought a fine exhibit from the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress. She and Mrs. Marian Leith, librarian of the Regional Library for the Blind, gave an interesting discussion of library services available. Shaw Brown, member of the Mooresville Lions Club, reported on progress at Camp Dogwood for the blind during the past year and mentioned some of the projected plans for the coming year. Mrs. John Bass Brown, Jr., member of the Board of the North Carolina Commission for the Blind, and Mr. W. E. Early, Executive Director of the Commission, described services available through that agency. This was followed by a lively question and answer period. Dr. Fred Crawford, Executive Director of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind, told of fine progress in his agency.

The afternoon session began with a panel discussion on the subject "Why a State Organization of the Blind and Why Join It." Speakers were Donald C. Capps, First Vice-President of the National Federation of the Blind, and Hazel Staley, first vice-president of the Tar Heel State Federation of the Blind. Sam Cole, superintendent of the Governor Morehead School for the Blind, described problems

and progress at the school during the past year, as well as some future plans. R. D. Watson of Raleigh told of continued efforts to win support for a home for the aged blind of the State. Jim Beatty of Charlotte, Representative from Mecklenburg County to the General Assembly of North Carolina, described his efforts and final success in getting a bill through the General Assembly eliminating discrimination against blind teachers in the State's public schools.

John Nagle brought us up to date on national legislation. Bill Waters, head of the Rehabilitation Department of the North Carolina Commission for the Blind, described the program of our training center at Butner. Don Capps, John Nagle, and Dr. Fred Crawford served on a panel, "What's on Your Mind," at which time several pertinent questions were asked and discussed.

The banquet on Saturday evening was the highlight of the convention. It was held in the beautiful Barringer ballroom. Our sighted guests said that the light reflecting from the crystal chandeliers was just beautiful.

Charters were presented to each of the four chapters. Mrs. John Bass Brown, Jr., member of the Board of the North Carolina Commission for the Blind, presented the State organization with an engraved silver punch bowl in appreciation of our cooperation and service. John Nagle's banquet address on "The Cornerstone of Federationism: Local Action" was an inspiration to everyone present. After the banquet there was more fun and fellowship, renewing old acquaintances and making new friends, in the hospitality room.

WSOC-TV gave us coverage this year for the first time. There was an interview with the president and vice-president and several shots in the meeting room and of the materials table.

A business meeting was held Sunday morning, at which time two new board members and a secretary were elected. The new board members are Ike Collins of Raleigh and George Starling of Winston-Salem. Mrs. Lois Sills of Greensboro was elected secretary replacing Joanne Moore.

President Collins has stated that he feels that he must retire at the end of this year. Since we have been relying on his personal equipment to get out our newsletter and to do other office work, this has presented us with a problem. The organization decided that we should make every effort to acquire our own equipment. The Charlotte chapter presented a check for three hundred dollars to be applied on a thermoform machine. Ways and Means for the Blind had sent a check for one hundred dollars, which was presented at this time. Members present gave an additional eighty dollars and promised more next month.

Several resolutions were passed. Among these were: that the Governor take whatever action is necessary so that the blind themselves may elect their representatives to serve on the Blind Advisory Committee to the Board of the Commission and to serve on the Board itself; and that the Commission be urged to utilize available stand locations and to place blind operators in these stands.

Mrs. Jan Nicholson, president of the Greensboro chapter, submitted an

invitation from the mayor of her city to the convention to meet there next year. This invitation was accepted.

Ninety-four people registered at the convention; but, as always, there were a few who did not register. Several lucky people won many fine door prizes. Awarding the prizes was ably handled by Rudolph Moore.

Although this was only our second convention, everyone agreed it was even better than last year's. Now we are looking forward to 1972 in Greensboro.

* * * * *

A FINGERTIP SCIENTIST
by
John Neary

[Reprinted with permission from *Life Magazine*. Copyright 1970, Time, Inc.]

Rejecting outright the suggestion that he get a Seeing Eye dog to help guide him around the busy streets of New Haven, young Geerat Jacobus Vermeij does, however, as a grudging concession to the irrevocable fact of his blindness, own a long, aluminum, red-tipped white cane.

He also owns that other traditional accouterment of the blind, a tin cup. His friends, who call him Gary, sometimes make small jokes about it, which he seems not to mind.

The cane spends most of its time leaning idly in one corner of Gary's book-clogged office in a geology laboratory at Yale University. And the cup, atop a filing cabinet nearby, contains not pencils but a relative few of Gary's

enormous collection of seashells. The rest of his shells, some 5,000 in all, which he collected over the past thirteen years by letting, quite literally, his fingers do half the walking over miles of beaches, are in little plastic boxes along with their Braille labels inside the unmarked drawers of the filing cabinet and at Gary's home in Nutley, New Jersey. A world tour last summer yielded more Pacific specimens--for the collection and for the doctoral thesis he is now completing.

Gary Vermeij (pronounced verrMAY), a twenty-four-year-old graduate student in biology, is naturally interested in the creatures that live inside shells. But, as a functional morphologist, it is the shells themselves, homes of some of the most ancient creatures on the planet, which hold a special fascination for him. In all their profusion and infinite variety they offer to him a challengingly puzzling set of hints to an answer to an almost cosmic question. Why is it, Gary wants to know, that the creatures of the earth assumed for themselves myriad shapes over their eons of evolution? The shells that Gary picks up on his field trips to tidal beaches are, he thinks, valuable clues--and especially handy ones for a scientist who happens to be blind. "We have order and pattern because it's the easiest way to organize the world," he says, explaining his consuming passion, "but first of all, what *are* some of the patterns? And, then, we want to know some more specific things about *why* we've got this pattern." Citing his investigation into the relationship of snails and their environments, he says, "It's a nice pattern and it makes a lot of sense and it's very predictable and all that sort of stuff, so one wants to know *why!* Well, you've got patterns like this all over

biology and all over science. Basically, science can exist simply because everything is ordered. And, I suppose I'm not alone in being in science because I want to know what it's all about, I want to explain these patterns, the reasons, the nature of the order."

For a functional morphologist on that kind of trail, and for one who also happens to be blind, snails are near-perfect subjects for field study: they don't move very fast and they don't bite.

The delicate hues and shades of the seashore which so delight the coffee-table conchologists are in fact among the last recollections of the visible world which Gary carries in his mind's eye. As a small boy in Holland, Gary traveled often with his parents from their home in the cheese-making town of Gouda to the coast of the North Sea, a trip of some twenty miles, where he marveled at the water-worn pebbles and shells washed up on the beach. Even then his sight was going--when he was only fourteen days old doctors had noted signs of glaucoma, and Gary recalls that most of the first years of his life were spent in hospitals, undergoing eye treatments. Finally, in 1949, when he was three, the dimming and distorted images faded and vanished. He recalls seeing at the very last not an object but a blur of color, yellow.

Soon after his family moved to the U. S. in 1955, seashells assumed the near-dominating fascination they now have for Gary. His fourth-grade teacher had set some ornate shells from the beaches of Florida out on the windowsill of the classroom and his inquisitive fingertips soon found them there. "They were so different from anything in

Holland," he recalls, the memory still exciting. "They were really weird! I decided that was quite interesting, and to go investigate ... to get some shells myself."

Such an impetuous decision might easily have resulted in just one more dusty pile of junk on a kid's dresser top, but instead it led Gary into marine biology--a profession that, given his blindness, should by all odds have been fraught with frustration and heartbreakng defeat. On the contrary, Gary has achieved strikingly precocious success as a budding and highly promising scholar. He was graduated *summa cum laude* from Princeton in just three years (a feat accomplished by the tiniest percentile of sighted Princeton students) and has spent the past two years at Yale laconically astonishing his fellow students and faculty members alike. "I think," says a close friend, another graduate student, twenty-four-year-old Jim Porter, "Gary's one of the best grad students they've got here." As a result of several field trips to the Pacific, the Atlantic and the Caribbean, Gary has had one important paper on the evolution of skeletons appear in the prestigious journal *American Naturalist* (an academic coup any faculty member might envy) and now has several others almost ready for publication in other journals. His doctoral thesis, which he is reluctant to talk about publicly yet--"I think I've got this all to myself"--will correlate for the first time striking relationships among shelled creatures and their environments.

Gary navigates quietly about New Haven in a suit and tie, guided only by his cane or a light grip on a friendly elbow. Most often the elbow belongs to Jim Porter, who served as Gary's field assistant

on a trip to Latin America a summer ago and who has since become a close friend and co-worker. In the lab, which by now he knows well, Gary moves at a likewise rapid clip, leaning slightly backward, arms outstretched, relying solely on memory and what he calls "echoing," some inner sonar, to tell him when to pause for a door.

What compelled a blind boy to choose such a difficult course and, having made the audacious choice, what sustains him? "I've never been bitter at all," he says. "No reason why I should have been. My idea about functional morphology is that you've got a 'strategy,' and you've got to make the most out of it. Well, that's exactly the way I feel about myself, too. Or," he says, putting it another way, "'you've got a general historical background, and 'Let's do with it what we can.'" He pauses, then exclaims, "Christ! I've never bothered to make that particular analogy before, but it certainly is in my paper! My gastropod paper makes the point," he explains, "that if you're going to be a gastropod, make the most of it--that's what it says. If one makes the decision to try something new, or to try something different--not new, *different*--then one sort of has to stick with it," Gary says. "And I've, I suppose, got some sort of urge to exhibit to my colleagues that, you know, it is '*poss*,' that it *can* be done . . . and that it's not very difficult to do."

Gary demonstrated how much he has managed--in spite of his blindness--to make "poss" one evening in the lab at Yale. He and Jim Porter got together to divide up some of the shells they brought back from their Latin American trip. Operating purely by touch and sound alone, Gary

unhesitatingly reeled off the scientific Latin names of the spiny little shells that he plucked, one by one, from his tin cup, the names of the beaches where he had found them, and even the dates. To anyone watching as his thin fingers probed delicately over the shells, his strikingly handsome features absorbed in concentration, one foot jiggling absently, this performance seemed impossible. No one could possibly remember *that* much, could educe that much data just from touch and sound.

Not only does the feel of the shell yield information to Gary's fingers, but the sound the shell makes as he lightly rubs it--as one might rub the rim of a crystal wine goblet--also tells him things about the thickness and solidity of the shell structure: vital clues about where it might have lived and in what climate. "You're absorbing little details of the ribs," he explained later, "how many cusps there are on the spine. Are there little scales on this rib? Are there little sub-ribs? When I pick up a shell I know what to look for." And, he might have added, listen to as well. So important to him is his hearing that, for fear of damaging it, he has decided not to join Jim Porter and other marine biologists who skin dive for sea creatures to study.

His onshore prowess alone, however, has convinced his colleagues that Gary is a formidable field man. "He's got just everything," Jim Porter says of their work together. "I rarely, if ever, got something that Gary didn't get. He's a fantastic field collector. Even the best wouldn't have produced the shells that Gary did. There's something going on in his fingertips that's very sensitive and very knowledgeable, too." In the field Gary covers his territory

systematically, wading into splash pools to search the bottoms, clambering across ancient lava flows, feeling gingerly under rocks. On the very first stop on their itinerary, Itamaraca, Brazil, Porter says, "Gary convinced me he knew what he was doing. There were three experienced collectors, and each time Gary found the best stuff. He got everything and more than anybody else did."

Yale Professor Willard D. Hartman recalls that when Gary first arrived at Yale, "he certainly convinced us immediately by the fact that when we handed him shells he was able to identify them. One thing he did want to know was what the general part of the world was that they came from, but he could identify things to genus, snails in particular, and clams, just by touching, which he had never seen before." And, says Professor Hartman, Gary could even identify the species a particular shell belonged to if he was told where it had been found.

"He's a very bright fellow indeed. And, although blind, he certainly is able to see a great deal when he looks at specimens. He sees things, I think, that those of us with sight don't see, because he is so sensitive, he has such sensitive tactile sense."

While Gary, naturally enough, doubts that his blindness gives him any advantage over his sighted colleagues in either the field or the lab, he admits "there may be some distraction of color, which has made people not worry about too many other things. I do find things that are very hard to see, simply because they're so well camouflaged. And there's no doubt that I can see them as well as something that's

patently obvious to anybody else. In that regard, I am very lucky. But there can be things hidden deep in the crevices of rocks, too, so maybe it averages out."

Gary's ideal life, he says, would combine "one big trip" every year, with plenty of time in a lab near a good library, and he has projects vaguely staked out to last a lifetime. At some point, he says, he'd like to try a book.

"Now maybe most people don't find life very interesting or anything very beautiful, but I'm afraid I don't agree. One reason I travel so much is because it's interesting, and life is very interesting, so make the most of it. If there are beautiful things around you, look at them and think about them, because they're nice and it's much better than thinking of plotting a war or making some ICBMs. That's not beautiful in any way or form. That's being horribly idealistic and ivory-towerish and all that sort of stuff, but fortunately, society allows us to exist in the sense that there's so much fat on society that parasites like me can do that still."

"Instead," Gary asks, "of rushing around 'getting things done,' why not just look at something--and find it interesting?"

* * * * *

NORTH DAKOTA REORGANIZES
by
Ramona Walhof

North Dakota's call to Mr. Jernigan for help in reorganizing and revitalizing the State organization was answered beginning Labor Day weekend, and a new North Dakota affiliate joined the ranks of

the NFB the following weekend.

Time was limited. The organizing had to fit in between the time that I would quit working and the time our new baby was to arrive. Other members of the organizing team were Mary Ellen Anderson; Doug Palmer and Dave Wollers from Iowa; And Curt and Judy (Dr. and Mrs. Saunders of Devils Lake, North Dakota) were able to help with the organizing work.

Progress was slow at first. Cities in North Dakota are small and spread apart. Labor Day weekend isn't the best time to reach people. But we knew that even where the population is 600,000, there are about 1,000 blind persons and that many of these would be very glad to find out about an organization like the Federation. We stuck to it, and our work paid off.

By the end of the week we had contacted over seventy people who were interested in a Federation affiliate in North Dakota. Not all of them could come to our organizing meeting, but enough had promised eagerly to come that we felt confident of a successful organizational meeting. Of course, we were glad to have several members of long standing remain with us, as well.

On Saturday, September 11, an enthusiastic group gathered at the Powers Hotel in Fargo. Dr. Curtis Saunders, president, called the meeting to order. Dr Rudolph Bjornseth, who has been active in the North Dakota affiliate since its beginning, moved that the Federated Blind of North Dakota disband and transfer its assets to a new NFB affiliate.

President Jernigan sent his greetings

by tape which got the meeting off to a fine start. There was some discussion of what the Federation is nationally and in various States, especially what it can become in North Dakota. No convention is quite as invigorating as it might be without a speech from our President, so I tried to do justice to one of the famous speeches. By afternoon we were ready to adopt a constitution and elect officers. A fine group of people were elected to serve as officers and board members. .

President of the National Federation of the Blind of North Dakota is Dr. Curtis Saunders, chiropractor of Devils Lake. Dr. Saunders attended St. Olaf's College for two years before working for and receiving his Doctor of Chiropractic from Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, Iowa. He is now a member of the Rotary Club and a member of the Council of the American Lutheran Church in Devils Lake. He has been a District Director in the North Dakota Chiropractors' Association. He would not want me to fail to mention his lovely wife Judy and their small son Steven.

First-vice president is David Lucken, Fargo. Mr. Lucken is operator of the Federal Building Snack Bar, and his wife Rosamond assists him there. Mr. Lucken received his BS in Education from Mayville State College after losing his sight in 1954 from a hunting accident. He was partly paralyzed after the accident as well and still has no use of his left hand. He is a member of the Men's Club in the American Lutheran Church.

George Ryan, Fargo, is second vice-president of the NFB of North Dakota and is a long-time Federationist. Mr Ryan is a retired car dealer, and he

retired from Nokken and Ryan Motors. He owns a part in and is chairman of the board of Central Apartments Association.

The new secretary is Mr. Duane Iverson, Williston. He is a high school senior this year and has already attended the NFB Convention in Houston. He was Williston's nominee for the Outstanding Handicapped Citizen for the year. A varsity wrestler, Duane wrestles at one hundred thirty-two pounds. Mable (Mrs. Ray) McCormick of Devils Lake is treasurer. She says it was her husband's idea for the North Dakota people in the NFB to sell rose bowls, but they all liked the idea, and have been selling quite a few. Mrs. McCormick is a nurse's aide at Lake Region Home for the Aged. She and her husband have two adult children, Linda and Wayne.

Mr. Ray Restad and Mr. Raphael Berger were elected to the first two board positions. Mr. Restad is a resident director in a men's dormitory at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, just across the Red River from Fargo. He has his Bachelor's and Master's degrees and is qualified to teach in the public schools. He has been vice-president of the J.C.'s of Minnesota. Recently he ran an insurance telephone service for the aged in Minneapolis. Mr. Berger is a contractor for B. and K. Electric in Dickinson. He has two blind children who are the cause of his interest in the Federation. He and his wife Ann have five other children, as well. Mr. Berger is also active in the District Cub Scouts.

The other two board positions are held by Doryce, (Mrs. Murl) Boom of Valley City and Judy (Mrs. Curtis) Saunders of Devils Lake. Mrs. Boom is a

housewife and mother of three big boys and a baby girl and is very proud of them all, especially the late-arriving little girl. Mrs. Saunders is also a housewife and mother of one small boy. She has taught school in Des Moines, Iowa and in Devils Lake. Last spring she was coordinator for an AAUW kindergarten program in Devils Lake. She was chosen as North Dakota's outstanding handicapped citizen by the Governor's Council on the Employment of the Handicapped.

Certainly this is an affiliate of which Federationists, in North Dakota and elsewhere, can be very proud. Many lingered long after the meeting Saturday to discuss all the work they needed to do and how to do it. I know we can expect great things from these people.

I congratulate you all in North Dakota, and I'm glad I had the opportunity of working with you for even such a short time.

* * * * *

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

by
Hugh Koford

In the book *LIFE A LA HENRI* (Simon and Schuster, 1934) there is a story telling how Henri Charpentier invented crepes Suzette, a French pancake.

One day the young cook (he was only fourteen) was preparing a complicated crepe sauce to be served to his patron, Albert, Prince of Wales. To his horror the sauce caught fire and poor Henri thought that both he and the sauce were ruined. Upon tasting it, however, he

found that the liquid was delicious and he immediately plunged the crepes into it, poured cordials over the dish and after lighting the sauce again, set the flaming platter before the Prince.

Asked by the delighted Albert what he called this masterpiece, Henri stammered, "Crepes Princesse." The Prince, acknowledging the compliment to himself, answered gallantly that there was a lady present. There was--a very small girl--would Henri change the name to Crepes Suzette? Henri would and did, and was on the way to becoming a famous cook.

The following is a version of Henri's recipe for CREPES SUZETTE:

SIFT:

3/4 cup all-purpose flour

RESIFT with:

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon baking powder

2 tablespoons powdered sugar

BEAT:

2 eggs

ADD and BEAT:

2/3 cup of milk

1/3 cup of water

1/2 teaspoon of vanilla

(1/2 teaspoon grated lemon rind)

COMBINE:

all the ingredients with a few swift strokes. Ignore the lumps; they will take care of themselves. Heat a skillet, (preferably a 5-inch skillet). Grease it with a few drops of oil. Add a small quantity of batter. Tip the skillet and let the batter spread over the bottom. Cook the pancake over

moderate heat. When it is brown underneath reverse it and brown the other side. Use a few drops of oil in the skillet for each pancake. Spread the cake with: JELLY (or butter and sugar, or any syrup or sauce you like best.)

ROLL:

the pancake and sprinkle with CONFECTIONERS' sugar.

* * * * *

MASSACHUSETTS CONVENTION

by

Rosamond M. Critchley

The eighteenth annual convention of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts was held at the Schine Inn, Chicopee, the weekend of October 1-2. As no chapter had found it possible to run the convention this year, the ABM itself played host. It was the largest convention in the organization's history, and a particularly stimulating program had been arranged, made even more so by the presence of our national President, Kenneth Jernigan.

As always, guests began arriving on Friday, some to attend pre-convention committee meetings, others just to get in some early socializing.

Things got underway officially on Saturday morning, with the usual welcoming speeches, roll call of chapters, and the president's report. The first program feature was a talk on computer programming for the blind, given by Robert Gildea, long-time expert in this field. It was followed by a lively and informative presentation of home teaching as a career, by Herman Allwein, home

teacher with the Pittsburgh branch of the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind.

The Saturday afternoon session was highlighted by Dr. Jernigan's talk, "The National Federation of the Blind as Seen by Its Principal Officer," along with two panel discussions. The first of these, on the blind small businessman, was moderated by Manuel J. Rubin, part-owner of Universal Products, Inc., and one-time ABM president. It featured Mrs. Bernice Hamer, director of a telephone answering service; Philip Pofcher, attorney; and Herman Blair, piano tuner; along with Edward J. Jekot, loan officer for the Western Massachusetts area, Small Business Administration. The other panel, on the pros and cons of the cabinet form of State government as it relates to services for the blind, was moderated by John Nagle, with Dr. Jernigan and John F. Mungovan, Commissioners for Iowa and Massachusetts respectively, as panelists. Governor Sargent had been asked to send a personal representative to be on this panel, but failed to do so, resulting in more cons than pros in this particular discussion.

Over three hundred attended the banquet Saturday evening, which was preceded by a reception where everyone had the opportunity to shake hands with the ABM officers and special guests. Among our honored guests was Senator Edward Brooke from Massachusetts. As the main speaker, Dr. Jernigan delivered one of the eloquent and sparkling addresses which Federationists have come to expect of him. The Brockton Chapter carried off the honors as winner of the annual Dr. Jacobus tenBroek Award for outstanding service of benefit to the blind.

Citations were also awarded to the Boy and Girl Scouts, who did such an excellent job for us throughout the convention. An added feature at this year's banquet was a completely new version of the NFB song, which had been written by Anita O'Shea, our outgoing president, and was sung by all present, with Rosamond Critchley at the piano.

On Sunday morning we were given a summary of progress being made by our Commission for the Blind, in such fields as social service and rehabilitation. Featured was a demonstration of a device for reading ordinary print, called the Optacon, given by two totally blind persons who had recently completed a three weeks' training course with this instrument.

Resolutions adopted included one expressing thanks to State Senator Nuciforo, who has twice introduced the Model White Cane bill in the Legislature, and one to change the name of the organization to the National Federation of the Blind of Massachusetts, in conformity with a growing trend among NFB affiliates. A further resolution to look into what can be done about some of the problems encountered by deaf-blind persons was referred to the State executive committee for consideration and possible action.

New officers elected to serve for the next two years were: president, Catherine Black, Boston; first vice-president, Armand Lefebvre, Holyoke; second vice-president, William Burke, Worcester; recording secretary, Rosamond Critchley, Worcester; corresponding secretary, Rev. Walter Woitasek, Brockton; treasurer, Edward Murphy, Worcester; legislative chairman, Thomas Cotter, Boston.

(Note: Since the close of the convention, Mrs. Black has found that she will be unable to serve as president, for reasons of health. At a special meeting of the executive committee, Mr. Lefebvre was elevated to the presidency, and Mr. Burke to first vice-president, with Eugene Sibley of Brockton appointed to fill the resulting vacancy in the office of second vice-president.)

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THE BLIND ARE CERTIFIED-- THE SIGHTED GET LETTERS

[Editor's Note: Mr. Jernigan and Mr. Mumford have been engaged in correspondence on yet another facet of the work of the Library of Congress Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, namely, proofreading Braille manuscripts. The Division issued a circular letter encouraging the use of sighted proofreaders. The circular drew vigorous protests not only from our President but from blind proofreaders as well.]

THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS
Washington, D. C. 20540

October 12, 1971

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

Your letters of September 16 and 30 have been discussed with Mrs. Dorf, herself a blind person who is Head of the Division's Volunteer Services Section. Mrs. Dorf has a staff of 16 persons, 11 of whom are blind and holding responsible positions.

In her letter of September 3 to Mrs. Grannis, Mrs. Dorf clearly states that

sighted persons who have taken the training in braille proofreading are qualified only to proofread braille transcriptions of fellow transcribers on a volunteer basis. None of these qualified sighted persons proofreads for the Library of Congress, but rather they assist in local situations where there are no funds for paying a blind certified proofreader, or where blind proofreaders are not in the immediate area. Transcribers are encouraged to proofread their own work before releasing it, and this additional training gives them confidence and develops their ability to locate and correct errors.

Blind persons are continually being instructed in braille proofreading; however, as stated in the brochure sent to all prospective students, full-time employment cannot be guaranteed. For this reason, certified proofreaders (and this means *blind* persons, since sighted persons are not certified) who live in localities where there are groups active in braille transcribing are encouraged to seek employment with such organizations. A braille edition of the directory VOLUNTEERS WHO PRODUCE BOOKS is available to all certified proofreaders so that they will have ready access to the organized groups of volunteers. In the print edition of this same directory names and addresses of all certified proofreaders are listed so that a group seeking the services of a proofreader can do so.

Assignments for proofreading for the Library of Congress are made only on request of the proofreader. This procedure is necessary, since some proofreaders want books on a regular basis, others want them only a few months out of the year, while still others want a book only when local

needs have been met.

In summary, the proofreading of all of the Library's hand-transcribed books is done by blind certified proofreaders. There has been no change in this policy. Our concern for more proofreaders in the field has been primarily to work with well-organized groups who are able and willing to pay for services.

On August 27, when I acknowledged receipt of your letter of August 25 and its enclosures representing complaints about the service and attitudes attributed to the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, I indicated that the review of these matters would require some time, but that I would attempt to have an answer to you before the end of September. My investigation is taking more time than I had originally estimated, but I shall send my reply to you by the end of next week.

Sincerely yours,

L. Quincy Mumford
Librarian of Congress

Mr. Kenneth Jernigan
President
National Federation of the Blind
524 Fourth Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

October 18, 1971

Mr. L. Quincy Mumford
Librarian of Congress
Washington, D. C. 20540

Dear Mr. Mumford:

I have your response to my letters of September 16 and 30, and I must say that I was disappointed in the tone of your letter as well as its substance. It seems to me that you failed altogether to deal with the questions I raised and that your statements almost bordered on the deceptive.

Let me specify: You say that Mrs. Dorf is blind. This I knew, and this was not an issue in my letters. You tell me that Mrs. Dorf has a number of blind people working for her. Again, I agree this is so, and it has nothing to do with the questions I raise. You go on to say that blind persons are still the only "certified" proofreaders and that sighted persons may only work as volunteers. Then you say: "In summary, the proofreading of all of the Library's hand-transcribed books is done by blind certified proofreaders. There has been no change in this policy."

These are the statements to which I referred when I said your comments bordered on the deceptive. It is doubtless true that only "certified" blind proofreaders do the proofing of the hand-transcribed books for the Library of Congress and that there has been "no change of policy" with respect to this item. However, in the area that really counts there has definitely been a change of policy. Formerly the Library of Congress used its influence and prestige to recommend that local transcribing groups have all of their materials "proofread." The term "proofread" meant by a "certified" blind person. It was, of course, always possible for a local group not to have its material proofread at all or to have a sighted person do it, but the tone and influence of the Library of Congress discouraged this practice. It has been, in

fact, not very widely followed.

Now, the Library of Congress not only sanctions the use of sighted proofreaders by local transcribing groups but it offers a proofreading course for the sighted. It is true that it does not "certify" these sighted proofreaders. It merely gives them a "letter" saying they have finished the course. Further, the Library says these people should be volunteers and not proofread for pay. Finally, you tell me that these volunteers would only proofread for their "fellow transcribers."

For whom else, one wonders, could they proofread? Even the hand-transcribed books of the Library of Congress are done by "fellow transcribers." All of this constitutes a very definite change of policy, and if you will reflect upon the matter I believe you will agree with the accuracy of this statement. It does not really alter matters to give a "letter" instead of a "certificate" or to say that the hand-transcribed collection of the Library of Congress is still only proofread by the "certified."

Overwhelmingly volunteer groups throughout the country produce more material locally than they produce for the collection of the Library of Congress--textbooks, books for individuals or local groups, etc. As I told you in my previous letters, there are many blind people who are "certified" proofreaders and who do not have all of the proofreading they want. Further, there are many other blind persons who would be interested in taking the course if they felt there was any likelihood of employment.

Now, with the new policy instituted by Mr. Bray's Division (and it is a new

policy), local groups will tend to use fewer and fewer blind proofreaders. They will not go to the bother of mailing material outside of their locality to a blind proofreader and they will feel that they can save the money they formerly spent by hiring their proofreading done by a blind person since they can now train one of their own sighted volunteer members to do the work for free.

I am in receipt of a copy of a letter (copy enclosed) from Mrs. Gertrude Sitt to Mrs. Dorf dated October 11, 1971. I hope you will give thoughtful attention to Mrs. Sitt's comments. As she points out, the sighted person cannot do proofreading as efficiently as the blind person because Braille is primarily a matter of touch, not sight. It is Mrs. Sitt's considered opinion (and mine) that the quality of Braille will suffer with the "new policy" of Mr. Bray's Division and that the blind proofreader will soon be largely out of work.

In light of these comments I ask you now to review this entire matter. I further ask that you write to me specifically concerning the "new policy" of Mr. Bray's Division. This is a serious situation, one that I hope and believe you will set about changing.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind

cc: Senator B. Everett Jordan
Senator Jennings Randolph
Congressman Wayne L. Hays
Iowa Congressional Delegation

15741 N. E. 14th Avenue
North Miami Beach, Florida 33162
October 11, 1971

Mrs. Maxine E. Dorf, Chief
Volunteer Braille Services
Division for the Blind
and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mrs. Dorf:

It was with deep concern that I read the note you wrote to Florence Grannis, Librarian for the Iowa Commission for the Blind, regarding the proposed plan formulated by your Division of certifying sighted volunteer Braillists as proofreaders of Braille.

To me, as an experienced proofreader, who has been working in this field for at least 20 years, the idea is impractical and unfeasible. In the first place, as you must know, Braille looks quite different to a sighted person than it feels when read with the fingers, and what can "pass" as a correction to the eyes cannot "pass" to the blind reader. I have seen innumerable corrections of this type, which look good and neat, but feel too close to be read accurately. In the second place, the errors are more difficult to detect with the eyes than with the fingers. In discussing this matter with several excellent and experienced transcribers, I found their experience to be that they cannot find their errors by looking at them, since the eye tends to dart hither and thither and has difficulty in keeping on a straight line, besides which the eyes tend to blur after looking at light dots on light paper. Therefore, it would seem to me that the accuracy desirable in Braille transcription

would suffer a grievous blow by this innovation.

I note that you mentioned in your letter to Mrs. Grannis the reluctance of some groups to send material out of their area. This need not be considered valid at all, since with the new mailing cases that are available, the manuscripts come in good condition both to the proofreader and are returned to the transcriber or the Library. As for the volunteer groups not having sufficient funds to pay the blind proofreader, it seems that your division is pandering to the expediency disease that has gripped the entire nation, both in industry and in government. Once the volunteer groups realize that there is a way to get their proofreading done without paying for it, they will be more and more prone to take this method of saving money and using it for other purposes.

The entire procedure seems unfair to those blind people who need this work for a livelihood. There are those who do not have enough work, and there are also those who have written to the Library of Congress for permission to take the proofreading course, and have never heard from the Division for the Blind at all. If there are not sufficient proofreaders who are blind to do the work that needs to be done, it may be due in part to the lack of emphasis given by your division in the Braille publications, to the schools, and to the placement specialists working for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

There are a great many deaf-blind persons for whom Braille proofreading might prove the only means of employment. Has this source been tapped? If the Division for the Blind is interested in speeding up the production of Braille books, and

working with the volunteer groups to accomplish this purpose, it might be advantageous to give a periodic test to the certified transcribers. As a proofreader I can speak from experience and say that some of the work that is coming to me is so poor that the time spent in proofreading is prohibitive. The chairman of one group for which I am doing some work at present had to discard the entire book that was transcribed by one of the Brailists, a book of eight volumes, because of the poor quality of the transcription, and the fact that the corrections had not been made satisfactorily, and in some instances not at all. There should be some sort of quality control set up in this area, to minimize the amount of poor quality work that is being released to blind readers.

I sincerely hope you will consider more carefully the ramifications of a step that you are about to take, and possibly reconsider the entire matter, since it seems unfortunate to say the least to be depriving blind people of their livelihood by doing what the division considers "expedient." I am afraid we will end up with more bad Braille than exists at present, and the entire program will suffer as a result.

Sincerely yours,

Gertrude Sitt

cc: Mr. Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind

2519½ E. Monument
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80909
September 25, 1971

Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind
524 Fourth Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Dr. Jernigan:

So the Library of Congress can't find blind proofreaders. Well, well. My proofreaders certificate has lain in a drawer since 1965 and, as yet, there has never been a single page of material to be proofread. During the late 1960's *Volunteer News*, which still keeps coming, cited plans to allow certified proofreaders to become qualified in specific languages. At least three times, over a period of several years, I wrote requesting the Spanish exam whenever it was prepared. As yet there has been no answer, and I've abandoned the practice of daily review so that proofreaders' skills have grown rusty and perhaps unusable by now.

Elsie Cowen of Denver hasn't become rusty. She's been certified for many, many years and during the ten years I've known her has proofread a majority of the school textbooks transcribed by the Red Cross. One time she was so bogged down in four volumes on how to make Jello, she was known as the "Jello kid." Of course she isn't paid for the many hours of work she puts in. Only rarely does she receive work from the Library of Congress despite her superior speed and proficiency.

Carol Ebner, 515 W. Platte, Colorado Springs, also took the transcribers course. Because her phone is disconnected, I can't verify when or if she became certified. But

she's good, and single-handedly transcribed our entire Braille Cookbook. . . .

Sincerely,

Marjorie Gallien

1418 North 17th Street
Boise, Idaho 83702
September 29, 1971

Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind
524 Fourth Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Dr. Jernigan:

It was with amazement that I learned today of Mr. Bray's decision to hire sighted as well as blind proofreaders. There are three items in my experience you may be interested to know regarding Braille proofreading.

1. As you know, I have traveled in several parts of the country talking to blind persons in the past few years. I have repeatedly talked with blind persons who are certified proofreaders but do not receive much work.

2. My sister, Susan Ford, took, or tried to take, the proofreader course from the Library of Congress and experienced very little cooperation from them. In particular, they were very, very slow in correcting lessons. She was neither employed nor in school for nearly two years, and that was not enough time to complete the course and earn some money from proofreading! I do not know if she

ever completed the course. Now she is working for her Master's degree and probably would not have time.

3. Two years ago I wrote to Maxine Dorf, Library of Congress, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, asking her how to become a Braille transcriber. I told her I would need to have the lessons in Braille. I asked several questions about how to have the material corrected and how long the course would take for completion. I never received a letter from Maxine Dorf. After my second letter to her, I received a print copy of the Instruction Manual for Braille Transcribing, but no letter.

My hope in attempting to get my transcriber's certification was to be able to teach others to transcribe, as there was a great need for that in Boise, as there still is. When I made this inquiry I was not employed full time and had time for this type of work. I was at best discouraged at the response. I then found work which lasted until the birth of our little girl.

Again without work, I approached the Utah Regional Library. They tried to refer me to Maxine Dorf, but I insisted on knowing if they didn't have transcribers in Utah who could correct my lessons. By this time I was thinking of possibly doing some proofreading, also. Finally, the Utah library agreed that they could correct my lessons there, and would. I sent the first three lessons to them, but they were never returned to me. I called about it a few times with no results.

Again I went to work and let the matter drop. This fall I am again unemployed and went directly to Mr. Butters about completing the transcriber's course.

Incidentally, Utah did send me a Braille copy of the Instruction Manual. Mr. Butters again tried to refer me to Maxine Dorf. I told him that I had tried to get response from her without success, and that I had tried with only little better success to take the course from his library, and that if he could not provide service, I would find someone else who would. "Therefore," I asked, "will you in Utah correct my lessons?" He said they would, and I have sent the first five lessons.

I still would like to complete the course and teach it and proofread some Braille. The proofreading certification requires completing a course following the transcriber course, I understand, so God knows how long it is likely to take me to become a proofreader! Nevertheless, I can complete the lessons rapidly. I would like to have some income from something I could do at home.

I am thoroughly disgusted with the cooperation (or lack of it) I have had in this matter, as you can well imagine.

Sincerely yours,

Ramona Walhof

P.S. Please feel free to use this letter if it will be helpful in any way. I am sorry I don't know more of the details about Susan's experiences. Right now I don't even know whether she is in Montana or Colorado, but she was scheduled to begin school in Greeley this month. RW

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WEST VIRGINIA CONVENTION
by
C. Edgar McDonald

Some one hundred nineteen persons attended the eighteenth annual convention of the West Virginia Federation of the Blind held the weekend of August 20-22, 1971, in Bluefield, West Virginia. State president Robert L. Hunt presided at all the business sessions which were held in the ballroom of the West Virginian Hotel.

The Four-County Federation of the Blind, which serves the Princeton-Bluefield area of West Virginia, acted as host affiliate for the convention. Though less than two years old, the Four-County Federation proved its organizational maturity by planning one of the most enjoyable and productive conventions in WVFB history.

One hundred and sixty persons attended the Saturday-night banquet which highlighted the weekend's activities. The featured speakers were Donald C. Capps, First Vice-President of the National Federation of the Blind, and Representative Lewis N. McManus, Speaker of the West Virginia House of Delegates.

Mr. Capps brought greetings from the national organization and congratulated the West Virginia Federation for taking such an active part in the organized blind movement.

Representative McManus praised WVFB's legislative program and its capable chairman, Victor Gonzalez. He cited what he termed "Victor's many factual presentations before the legislature." Mr. McManus briefly summarized recent

legislative victories for the blind and promised his support for all WVFB programs.

Among the honored guests at the banquet was West Virginia's Fourth District Congressman Ken Hechler.

The weekend program included several stimulating panel discussions. One such discussion concerned the talking book services from West Virginia's new regional library in Charleston. The participants were Miss Frances Jones, assistant State librarian. Mrs. Dolly Rapking, director of the regional library; Ben Robertson, director of talking book circulation; and Ray Thomas, a blind member of the State Library Advisory Council.

Another discussion featured representatives from the West Virginia Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. General remarks concerning new rehab services were presented by Joseph Lobutts, chief of services for the blind, and by Eugene M. Ashworth, retired chief of services for the blind, who now serves as a department consultant. Stephen Hart, mobility instructor at the State rehabilitation center, described recent improvements in the center's blind adjustment program. James Burk, supervisor of vending stand programs, hailed the success of Charleston's new vendateria. The vendateria, a self-service food facility located in the State's new capital complex, is being operated by the West Virginia Society for the Blind and Severely Disabled. Burk acknowledged the efforts of the West Virginia Federation of the Blind in helping secure the necessary funds for establishing the facility.

A third presentation featured three out-of-State visitors discussing Federation activities in their home States. The guests were Donald C. Capps of Columbia, South Carolina; Mrs. Marie Morrison, mid-Atlantic regional representative of the American Foundation for the Blind, who discussed a number of the programs and services offered by the Foundation; and Glenn Crosby of Houston, Texas, first vice-president of the Bluebonnet State Federation of the Blind. These remarks were followed by a presentation from Victor Gonzalez concerning the past year's Federation activities in West Virginia.

Eldon E. Shipman, superintendent of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind reported to the convention on some of the school's new training programs and requested that the Federation urge legislative approval of the needed funds.

Among the resolutions adopted by the convention was one authorizing the State president or his appointed representative to attend Federation conventions in neighboring States in order to learn something of what other NFB affiliates are doing. Another resolution urged greater representation for the blind on all policy-making and advisory boards concerned with services for the blind.

Two one hundred fifty dollar scholarships were presented during the banquet to two blind college students from West Virginia. The C. C. Cerone Scholarship, given in memory of one of the founders of WVFB, went to Gaylia Jean Borror, nineteen, of Elkins. Miss Borror is a 1971 graduate of the West Virginia School for the Blind at Romney. She has been accepted as a physical

education major at West Liberty (West Virginia) State College.

Christine Maynard, twenty-two, was this year's first recipient of the Jacobus tenBroek Scholarship. Miss Maynard is a 1966 graduate of the Romney school and a 1969 graduate of Marshall University. She is currently working toward a Ph.D. in Chinese history at the University of Virginia.

Lifetime active memberships in the West Virginia Federation of the Blind were awarded to Paul A. Hughes of Wheeling and to Mrs. Laura Hoffmaster of Romney. Hughes, though not blind himself, has long been interested in Federation activities and has served as secretary of the State organization since 1966. Mrs. Hoffmaster is a teacher at the West Virginia School for the Blind and an active member of the school's Alumni Association.

A lifetime associate membership in the organization was awarded to T. S. Funk, director of the West Virginia Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

The 1971 WVFB Yearbook was dedicated to Mrs. Evelyn Milhorn of Wheeling. Though Mrs. Milhorn has no visual impairment, she has served the West Virginia Federation as financial secretary since 1960.

Mrs. Laura Collier of Princeton was chosen as the 1971 Federationist of the year. Mrs. Collier has served for four years as executive board member from the Alumni Association of the School for the Blind. In addition, she was a moving spirit in organizing the Four-County Federation of the Blind. Her husband, Harry Collier, is currently president of the Four-County

Federation.

Officers elected for the coming year were president, Robert L. Hunt of Buckhannon; first vice-president, Jack W. Sprinkle of Arlington; second vice-president, Guy Parks, Clarksburg; secretary, Paul A. Hughes, Wheeling; financial secretary, Mrs. Evelyn Milhorn, Wheeling; treasurer, E. Sid Allen, Huntington; chaplain, Harry Highland, Parkersburg; delegate to the 1972 NFB Convention, Robert L. Hunt; alternate delegate to the NFB Convention, Harry Collier of Princeton.

Throughout the weekend names were selected at random for the awarding of door prizes. These prizes included many useful articles contributed by the various affiliates as well as a number of cash awards.

Membership in the West Virginia Federation of the Blind now totals four hundred fifty-one. The nine local affiliates which make up the organization are located in Beckley, Charleston, Clarksburg, Huntington, Morgantown, Parkersburg, Romney, Wheeling, and Princeton-Bluefield. The 1972 WVFB convention will be held in Parkersburg.

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TEACHERS DIVISION
PUBLISHES NEWSLETTER
by
Robert Acosta

This is the first Newsletter of the Teachers Division of the National Federation of the Blind. In order to keep our membership abreast of the varied activities of our organization, subsequent

issues will be published (in both ink-print and Braille) at least four times a year. We hope you will contribute to the success of these issues by sending us any information concerning placement as well as articles about successful blind teachers.

This first issue will be published in *The Braille Monitor* in order that the general membership of the Federation may be apprised of our new publication.

In order to receive a subscription for these Newsletters, please send one dollar to the Division president, Mr. Robert Acosta. Your one dollar contribution will also entitle you to full membership in the Division provided that you are a member in the National Federation of the Blind. Your Newsletter editor will be Miss Judy Miller from Colorado. However, for the present, please send all news items to the president. We will be most happy to receive any newsworthy information which you believe will be helpful to the membership.

A future project of the Teachers Division shall be the recording of the NEA Journal on tape at 1-7/8 speed. This will of course depend upon the response of our membership. We are charging a ten dollar yearly rental for this publication. Make checks payable to the Teachers Division of the NFB and send them to Robert Acosta. The rental will cover the expense for tapes and other maintenance costs. These tapes will be sent to you on a loan basis; when you return the old tape you will be sent the new issue.

The Teachers Division is also in the process of compiling a directory of teachers as well as students enrolled in schools of education. The purpose of such

a directory is to enable the membership to communicate with each other regarding their respective fields. Also, this directory can be used to show administrators that blind teachers are working in practically every discipline imaginable. In the directory we will give name, address, college attended, major, and school where teaching. We would like to encourage those who plan to join the Teachers Division to send us the above information along with your one dollar annual dues.

Before concluding our first issue, perhaps we should discuss the overall purpose for the Teachers Division of the NFB. There is a three-fold purpose: First, we will share those concepts which will make us stronger teachers both academically and professionally. Secondly, through a massive public education campaign, we seek to convince school administrators that blindness in a teacher need not be an insurmountable handicap. And third, we intend to share employment information with the blind teachers of this nation. We will do so by working closely with teacher placement offices, but equally important will be your contributions to this Newsletter. Let us know if you are looking for a job or if you know of a vacant teaching position.

The future of the Teachers Division of the National Federation of the Blind will truly be an exciting one. In our organizational efforts we are looking forward to meeting many of you in the year to come. You can all be instrumental to the success of the Teachers Division; so in the words of our great Federation President, "Go man, go!"

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KENTUCKY CONVENTION
by
Mae Budesheim

On September 10 and 11, 1971, the annual convention of the Kentucky Federation of the Blind was held in Covington, Kentucky. The host affiliate had secured accommodations in the Holiday Inn and Federationists began to arrive by noon on Friday. During the afternoon and early evening the greetings of old friends and introductions to new friends were the main event.

The registration, far from being the necessary "evil" it so often is, was handled with an ease and smoothness that caused no short tempers or bruised feelings! Tickets for the banquet and for the luncheon were obtained at the registration table. There were one hundred twenty-eight registered with ninety-seven tickets sold for the luncheon on Saturday.

The Hospitality Room was opened at seven, and one of the highlights of the evening's entertainment planned by the Northern Kentucky Association of the Blind, our Covington Chapter, was the singing group from Cloverhook Printing House known as "The Clovernnotes." They were very good, both their musical contributions and their companionship. We enjoyed them very much. Our only regret was that they came from Ohio, therefore could not belong to Kentucky, but they are Federationists, which made us brothers and sisters under the skin.

During the entire evening there were delicious cookies and drinks for all, served by friendly, smiling people. After the Clovernnotes had given their all, responding to request after request, they left amidst

resounding applause. The evening was still young and all were ready for more of the same, so our own Ernie Bourne took the piano bench and then the room began to rock! Singing everything from hymns to "County and Western!" This reporter soon found out that she was "out of it" when it came to the pop music of today, as a participant, but the enjoyment was wholehearted! We were favored with several solos by Orville Phillips; and when Orville begins to sing, the rest of us usually keep quiet and just listen! At a late hour it seemed that all "with one accord" remembered that tomorrow was going to be a full day, and so the hall emptied with "goodnight" and "see you tomorrow" as we made ready for bed and another day of hard work, good fellowship, and good eating!

Saturday morning at nine-thirty we met for our Devotional, led by Letcher Vanderpool. The Chaplain of the Federation, Orville Phillips, opened with prayer, then Letcher brought a short message that left you with a feeling that the love of God and love for our fellowman could not be surpassed as the most important considerations of today.

The president, Bob Whitehead, called the convention to order at ten o'clock, and we proceeded with the business of the day. Every chapter president was there and brought a good report from the separate affiliates, showing that memberships were increasing, all chapters were solvent, and legislation of the National Federation actively supported. One chapter reported that they had a member who wanted to become a part of the Student Division with the assurance that there were several more to be contacted. A new chapter had been

organized in the Lexington area and they were there with a nice representation. Two other chapters are working on similar projects, one for the eastern area of our State, and one for the western area. From these reports it was very evident that the Kentucky Federation is at work, is growing and expanding, and the blind of our State are being sought, found, and made to feel that they are not alone, but are a part of the larger family, the National Federation.

The convention members were brought up to date on the social security program and urged to request information from qualified social security representatives, rather than taking the "misinformation" given by well-meaning friends. So often they are deprived of the help that is there for them, unless they get the correct information. Representative Ruh of the Covington area spoke to us briefly about his willingness to help us in every way possible. He was a most inspiring person to listen to. He had been stricken with polio when he was five years old, and has walked only with the aid of crutches ever since. Yet he has really shown by his life that a physical handicap is not an insurmountable obstacle. His Dad gave him his motto long years ago, when he told young Ruh that "if you want sympathy, you can find it in the dictionary under 'S!'"

After lunch we reassembled for the final work session of the day. Many items of business were discussed and dealt with, the final one being the election of officers for the coming year. The following were presented by the nominating committee as officers for the coming year, and were duly elected by the assembly:

President, Bob Whitehead; first vice-president, Pat Vice; second vice-president, Letcher Vanderpool; third vice-president, Dennis Franklin; recording secretary, Peggy Peake; corresponding secretary, Mae Budeshim; treasurer, Harold Reagan; chaplain, Orville Phillips. President Whitehead then appointed: legislative chairman, Art Kopp; finance chairman, Ernie Bourne.

Following adjournment, the Stand Operators held their meeting and Sybil Martin was elected president.

At the banquet that evening, where delicious food and delightful fellowship was the spirit of the occasion, our own John Nagle was guest speaker. He brought greetings from the President of the National Federation, and also a most informative and instructive message. His remarks concerning the local chapter level should help all of us make our local affiliate a more effective part of the State as well as the national movement. As our convention came to an end, it was very evident that our aim is to make the coming year bigger and better than ever. Goodbyes usually ended with "See you in Chicago!" So, look out, Chicago, here we come--Federationists all!

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MARYLAND CONVENTION

On Friday, October 15th members and friends of the Maryland State affiliate began to register for the fifth annual convention at the Interstate Inn at College Park, Maryland. Our honored guests were Patricia and Manuel Urena.

The indefatigable John Nagle and

Manuel Urena, speaker par excellence, extended greetings from the National Federation of the Blind at the well attended board meeting after which hospitality flowed at the reception for Mr. and Mrs. Urena.

The Saturday sessions were informative, interesting and certainly provocative. Welcoming words, an invocation, and the other usual amenities preceded Mr. Urena's stimulating, and at times broadly humorous address "Evaluation of Services to the Blind." Mrs. James Gleeson representing her husband, Commissioner of Montgomery County, read a White Cane Proclamation on behalf of the County.

The morning panel discussion moderated by John Nagle with participants Herbert Wolfe, Maryland School for the Blind; George Keller, Services to the Blind, Vocational Rehabilitation; Jerome Brooks and Milton Simmonds, Maryland Workshop for the Blind; and James Murray, State Library for the Physically Handicapped encompassed a wide variety of subject matter of vital concern to all the blind and provoked spirited audience participation, particularly in the areas of conditions at the Maryland Workshop for the Blind, the plight of vending stand operators and the quality of education being peddled at the Maryland School for the Blind.

Mrs. Anne Reed, Maryland State Department of Social Services, held forth after lunch, with a report outlining the services offered by her agency concerning grant programs.

The conveniences and more aptly the lack of conveniences, offered by the

public transportation systems, urban and suburban, projected rapid transit systems presently being constructed or still on the drawing board, and the *needs of the blind patrons* of these systems were the themes of the panel moderated by Roger Petersen. Walter Addison, Mass Transit Authority of Baltimore, and Koty Pfanstiehl, Office of Community Service, Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority, presented expositions and answered questions ably and informatively.

Ned Graham shed light upon the State legislative picture and John Nagle, Chief of the Washington, D. C. Office, NFB, held forth inimitably on the national legislative scene.

The chairman of the nominating committee presented his slate. Resolutions were adopted concerning 1) the inadequacy of library services offered by the Library of Congress and 2) a resolution concerning the remedying of antiquated and deplorable conditions existing at the School for the Blind in Romney, West Virginia.

Cocktails and dinner surfeited the inner man and the piece-de-resistance was Manuel Urena's speech outlining in no uncertain terms the oppressive practices of the "Pseudo Scientists and the New Technocrats."

Although the convention per se was ended for the day, high spirits of divers kinds prompted discussions that continued well into the night.

Janiece Conard, chaired the Sunday morning Public Relations panel, "Image of the Federation," assisted by Manuel Urena and James Doherty with broad

participation from the audience.

At the business meeting which followed each of the four local chapters presented its report and John McCraw delivered, in his own eloquent style, the president's message. Officers elected to serve one-year terms were: second vice-president, Wesley Williams, Silver Spring; treasurer, Georgia Myers, Cumberland; delegate to the national Convention, John McCraw, Baltimore; and alternate delegate, Ravenel Thompson, Baltimore.

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JARGON AND RESEARCH-TWIN
IDOLS IN WORK WITH THE BLIND
by
Kenneth Jernigan

[Editor's Note: United States Senator Edward W. Brooke of Massachusetts attended the convention of our NFB affiliate in that State held during the first weekend in October 1971. Our President was the banquet speaker. Senator Brooke was so impressed that he had the speech inserted in THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and made the following introductory remarks:]

Mr. President, some time ago I was privileged to participate in a convention of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts. I was, as always, impressed with the courage, the creativity, and the fortitude of these wonderful people.

But I confess, I was not aware until that occasion of the extraordinary degrees of discrimination experienced by the hundreds of thousands of our citizens who happen to be blind. Blind people in this

country encounter outright discrimination in housing, job opportunities, travel, insurance, and a host of other areas. So deep is their concern that many of them suggested to me that the blind, and perhaps other handicapped persons, should be covered under the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, and should be included in a new Constitutional amendment forbidding discrimination against the handicapped. I intend to look into this matter closely and to propose legislation where necessary to correct this intolerable condition.

The speech delivered at the convention by Kenneth Jernigan, president of the National Federation of the Blind, speaks to the insights and determination of our handicapped citizens. Mr. Jernigan gave a speech that surely applies to us all. It was by no means the standard inspirational speech. Rather it was the speech of a man possessed of a remarkably clear perception of one of our gravest national problems: the tendency to ignore the individual.

Jargon and research, as Mr. Jernigan so aptly demonstrated, is the symptom of a nationwide tendency toward dehumanization, a tendency to downplay the role of the individual, to consider only numbers to be important, to become lost in our own prose and bureaucratic formulations.

Mr. Jernigan obviously believes that learning can be fun. His speech is laced with wit and humor, making his observations and recommendations all the more memorable. For the edification of Senators and of all persons everywhere who are engaged in the research and application of social programs, I ask

unanimous consent that Mr. Jernigan's speech be printed in the RECORD.

JARGON AND RESEARCH--TWIN IDOLS IN WORK FOR THE BLIND

It is written: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images.... Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them." This Biblical injunction is as valid now as it was in ancient times. It is as valid in secular as ecclesiastical terms; and it is, perhaps, especially valid today in the field of work with the blind.

In fact, it seems to me that all of the gains we have made in improving the conditions of blind people are threatened by an ever growing worship of twin idols--false gods, if you will--the idols of *jargon* and *research*. The worshippers of these graven images are coming in increasing numbers, from the ranks of the professionals in our field--people who are placing technical means ahead of human ends--people who have become obsessed with techniques, with the tools and toys of their trade, and in so doing have forgotten the true purpose of their labors. That purpose, of course, is the improvement of the condition of blind people. More exactly, it is their elevation to productivity and dignity, to self-sufficiency and self-confidence.

Let us look, briefly, at each of these two objects of worship--before which so many of the professional experts in the fields of welfare and rehabilitation bow down today.

First, the idol of *jargon*. This is the verbal tendency to escalate the simple into the complex; to prefer the long-winded polysyllable to the short, clear word or

phrase; to suppose that obscure and technical language is more professional and respectable than straight talk. This jargonizing tendency is the occupational hazard, not alone of the welfare and rehabilitation people, but of all others who make a fetish of technical expertise and specialism. The most heavy-handed jargonists of all are probably to be found in the universities and graduate schools, where apprentices in nearly every field are trained to write and speak "in tongues"--that is, in academic tongues, which none but their fellow converts can possibly understand.

Let me offer a homely example of how this process works. You all know the simple nursery rhyme which goes:

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are,
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

Here is how one inspired wit has jargonized this familiar verse:

"Scintillate, scintillate, globule orific,
Fain would I know of your nature specific.
Loftily poised in ether capacious,
Strongly resembling a gem carbonaceous."¹

Here is another example, drawn from a masterwork of bureaucratic satire, entitled *Federal Prose*. The problem which the authors pose for themselves is how a bureaucrat would express the familiar maxim, "Too many cooks spoil the broth." Their formulation reads: "Undue multiplicity of personnel assigned either concurrently or consecutively to a single function involves deterioration of quality in the resultant product as compared with the product of the labor of an exact

sufficiency of personnel.”²

A classic illustration of the jargonizing syndrome is the famous definition of evolution set forth by Herbert Spencer almost exactly a century ago. “Evolution,” declares Spencer, “is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from a relatively, indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a relatively, definite coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation.”³ Fortunately, we have a tongue-in-cheek translation of this overblown sentence, rendered by the philosopher William James. It reads: “Evolution is a change from a no-howish, untalkaboutable, all-alikeness to a somehowish and in general talkaboutable not-all-alikeness by continuous sticktogetherations and somethingelsifications.”⁴

In our time, and in our own field of work with the blind, as everywhere else, there are a number of expressions which every speaker feels he has to use; although, they are almost never defined and rarely if ever quite understood. One such expression is “conceptual framework.” Once, after I had heard an expert at a rehabilitation conference repeat that term several times over, I was moved to ask him whether it would be correct to say that a conceptual framework was just a long-winded term for a *bed*.

Now let me ask you to make a concerted effort, along with me, to find the point--or even the “conceptual framework”--of the following paragraph from a report of the Regional Rehabilitation Research Institute of the University of Utah:

The counseling relationship [the report states] may be defined as a dyadic relationship which has special characteristics that tend to determine some of the aspects of the parameters of attraction, influence, and interaction. It should be noted that these parameters are not rigid structural entities, but are fluid systems which are interrelated and subject to the actions and reactions of the dyadic partners. As an example of the fluid nature of the parameters, an attractive person is more likely to wield influence in a dyadic situation and his co-communicator is more apt to interact with him. . . . While the counselor may be an attractive person and capable of influence in the dyad, if he is punitive in either his verbal or non-verbal communication his interactive capabilities may be inhibited.⁵

Shall we try to unscramble this learned statement? In ordinary language it might sound something like this: “In counseling, two persons meet for a purpose and either get along well, or they don’t. Other things being equal, a friendly counselor will do a better job, unless he loses his cool.”

The danger posed by the idol of Jargon is more than that it clutters up the verbal landscape and makes it hard for the reader to plow his way through. It is the danger of losing altogether the needle point of the discourse under a haystack of wordage. It is the danger of confusing the issue--if indeed there is one--through confusing and torturing the language. It is the danger, to the reader or listener, of being seduced by resounding rhetoric into accepting loose logic.

Let us try another example of

jargonism at work--this time from the field of welfare. In an article entitled "Social Nearness Among Welfare Institutions," the author states: "It was noticed in the preceding sections that the social welfare organizational milieu presents an interdependence, a formal solidarity, a coerced feeling of unity. However divergent the specific objectives of each organization, theoretically they all have a common purpose, the care of the so-called underprivileged. Whether they execute what they profess or not is a different question and one which does not fall within the confines of these pages."⁶

Now what does this collection of heady phrases mean? Mostly nothing, as far as I can see. I suggest that any writer who can go so far out of his and the reader's way to avoid simple words and straightforward sentences might well be suspected of dressing up a weak case. It just might be that, if his case were to be put forward clearly and unadorned, it would not merely be *revealed* but exposed

Let us go back for a moment into that office where the rehabilitation counselor sits behind his desk, pulling his parameters together and waiting for a client to walk in to make up a dyad. As he waits, he recites to himself some inspirational words from a leading theorist of counseling, Dr. Frederick C. Thorne, who holds a Ph.D. in psychology from Columbia and an M.D. from Cornell. The words are these: "The eclectic approach to scientific case handling basically depends upon adequate diagnosis as the cornerstone of all case handling in order to identify etiologic causes and apply appropriate therapeutic methods according to their indications and contraindications."⁷ Thus fortified by

that heady draft, the counselor presses a button and calls for his first appointment.

And now, for my last (I almost said "penultimate") illustration of toxic jargonism at work in the field of rehabilitation. Here is a passage relating to work with the blind:

The multi-disciplinary approach was a basic consideration, with the total range of services placed on the spectrum to deal with the problems of the whole person, rather than the symptomatic treatment of specific problems in an isolated manner to the exclusion of broad perspective. . . . The blind of the nation have usually not had a full range of services available to them, thus limiting and blighting their innate potential and contributing to poverty and disadvantage--symbolized and exemplified by an informational and cultural gap. In the closed cycle where rehabilitation has often seemed contra-indicated, the difficulty has sometimes been one of resources rather than one of motivation. If funding is available so that we can expand our facility we hope to contribute to the alleviation of this condition "

While that chain of great thoughts still rings in your ears, let me make a confession. The author of the passage is none other than I. I received a letter from an official in Washington sometime ago, one of the higher-ups in Federal rehabilitation, who demanded from me a "concise narrative," and couched his demand in such jargonized terms that I could not tell what he meant or wanted. So I responded in the style indicated. If you ask me what my words meant, I tell you frankly that I haven't the slightest idea. Indicently, I presume they satisfied the Washington expert since I have not to

this day heard from him again concerning the matter.

The second of the graven images to which I wish to call your attention is the idol of *research*. It is, as you will perceive, a close relative of the idol of *jargon*. For it is often an extreme case of research-itis which produces the verbal diarrhea we have been examining. Research-itis is a common affliction brought on, among other things, by the chilly atmosphere of would-be professional agencies and scientific laboratories. Among its early symptoms are the continual sharpening of what are called measuring rods and other research tools; an attraction to numerology, the mysterious science of numbers; and the habit of using directional and mathematical terms such as "vector," "valence," and "parameter." After the virus has had its full effect, the victim becomes delirious and talks in a code language, consisting mainly of initials and abbreviations like IBM, MMPI, HEW, and NIMH. Observe the following sample, obtained from the Regional Rehabilitation Institute of the University of Utah--that is, the RRRI of UU:

One of the first scales developed by the Institute was the Social Vocabulary Index (SVI) which attempts to measure the self concept system of an individual. The SVI was patterned after the Bills Index of Adjustment and Values (IAV). The SVI is composed of six subscales which are the: Self Concept Scale, Self Acceptance Scale, Ideal Self Scale, Concept of Others Scale, Vocabulary Scale, and Marlow-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. . . .⁸

The research sample of 88 vocational rehabilitants was comprised of 57, or 65

percent, male clients, and 31, or 35 percent, female clients. The mean age at application for services for the male clients was 35.7 years and 33.2 years for the female clients. . . .⁹

The scoring of the IS also yields three different measures of concordance: (a) Intrapersonal Concordance, (b) Interpersonal Concordance, and (c) Reciprocal Concordance. . . .¹⁰ It is interesting to note that the SVI and IS scale were so constructed as not to be sensitive to differential response patterns of males and females. . . .¹¹

The subject of this particular piece of research (you may be surprised to learn) is the professional relationship of the counselor and the client in rehabilitation. The purpose is ostensibly to improve counseling--that is, to help the counselor help the client to help himself. It is possible that such will, indeed, be the outcome of the numerous scales, tests, interviews, experiments, and statistical manipulations contained in the hundred printed pages of the study. But I doubt it. This research project seems to me almost a classic example of the reversal of means and ends--the error of becoming obsessed with mere means for their own sake, and thus converting them into ends--the mistake of getting caught up in the strategies and mechanisms of the methods themselves, at the cost of losing all sight of the goal.

Let us be clear, and fair, about the role of research in rehabilitation and related professional fields. It can be a valuable adjunct to the main business at hand--which is the business of getting people out of distress and dependency, and into employment and independence.

Where efforts are plainly and sensibly geared to these ends, there cannot be too much research, or too many researchers, or too sophisticated a methodology. The quarrel is not with *relevant* research or with *competent* researchers doing *material* things: the quarrel is with so-called "research" that is irrelevant, incompetent, and immaterial.

No one in the field of vocational rehabilitation--least of all a director of a State program--can fail to be gratified by the rapid growth of national interest and commitment to this area during the past fifteen years. However, the emphasis is not always properly directed, and the word does not necessarily fit the deed. Since the Federal program of research and demonstration was started by the "New Look" legislation of 1954, more than 1,000 separate projects have been sponsored by the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration (now the Rehabilitation Services Administration). Some few of these projects, of course, have undoubtedly proved out in terms of hard results--by which I mean primarily more efficient job placement and more effective counseling. All this is very much to the good.

While it is easy for those of us who labor in this expanding industry of human salvage and human engineering to congratulate ourselves on our progress, it is harder to be self-critical. It is still harder to be suspicious of the sheer volume of research materials; and it is hardest of all to be doubtful about the good effects of all that money.

But I am critical; I am suspicious; and I am doubtful. Take the matter of money, for example. In the first year of the

research and demonstration grant program, 1955, eighteen new grants were sponsored and \$298,000 was committed to support them. That was a pretty good beginning. But just eleven years later, in 1966, some one hundred fifty-three new grants were endorsed by Federal rehabilitation and (note this) \$20,568,000 was funded to support those projects.¹² More than twenty million dollars, in one year--not for the ongoing work of administering the regular programs of rehabilitation, but for new projects of "research and demonstration."

What are the implications of this tremendous outlay of funds for purposes of research? It means, for one thing, that an awful lot of research gets done--and that, a lot of *awful* research gets done! It means that, with the vast number and variety of projects submitted to get at the gravy, the Federal agency's standards for choosing among them become ever more arbitrary and technical. That project which looks respectably scientific, comfortably professional, and properly complex has a strong edge over the one which looks relatively simple and uncomplicated and (worst of all) possibly original and ground breaking. All those human computers and numerologists whose main interest is in refining their conceptual frameworks are natural winners in the great Federal game of grantsmanship. Not only are they winners, but they are fairly sure to have their grants continued and extended for as long as they can come up with graphs and tables and data which furnish what is known as "validation" and "confirmation" of the original findings in the initial project.

Here, for example, is a report entitled "Construct Validation Studies of the

Minnesota Importance Questionnaire"--a bulletin in the University of Minnesota Studies in Vocational Rehabilitation (Number Eight). The object of the study, we are told, was to check on the Importance Questionnaire (MIQ) on the basis of Proposition III of the Theory of Work Adjustment, which states: "Satisfaction is a function of the correspondence between the reinforcer system of the work environment and the individual's set of needs, provided that the individual's abilities correspond with the ability requirements of the work environment."¹³

Let me give you a sample of how the study goes:

*The MSQ, like the MIQ, consisted of 100 five-response-choice items scoring on 20 scales. The items of the MSQ were mainly items of the MIQ rewritten as "satisfaction" items. The MSQ was administered to 1,793 employed individuals. MSQ scales were generally found to have lower means and higher variabilities than the corresponding MIQ scales. . . . Like the MIQ, the scale intercorrelations of the MSQ were somewhat higher than desired but with sufficient reliable specific variance to be interpreted as relatively unique dimensions. Factor analysis of the MSQ scales yielded two factors interpretable as satisfaction with the "job" and with the "boss."*¹⁴

And that's not all: "The combined findings from the two analyses support the construct validity of ten of the sixteen scales studied: Ability Utilization, Achievement, Advancement, Authority, Compensation, Creativity, Independence, Responsibility, Social Service and Variety.

Little evidence was obtained for the construct validity of the Activity, Moral Values, Recognition, Security, Social Status and Working Conditions scales of the MIQ."¹⁵

Besides these great ideas, one more thing is interesting in the seventy-five-page printed report of the Minnesota team. My hunch that a truck driver could lick a nursing assistant was (I think) confirmed and validated on Page 42 in this clear-cut manner: "The data were re-analyzed using truck drivers as the high-reinforcement group (median rank of 1, range of 7) and nursing assistants as the low-reinforcement group (median rank of 16, range of 6). The nursing assistants were used because no job groups obtained median ranks of 17, 18, or 19."¹⁶

The university which carried out this research is one of eighteen or more selected a few years back to serve as special research and training centers for rehabilitation purposes. It is noteworthy that (as of July 1967) eleven of these centers were medically oriented; three were vocationally oriented; three dealt with mental retardation; and one dealt with deafness. None dealt directly with the blind.¹⁷ (Under the circumstances I am not sure whether this fact makes me happy or sad.) Of course, the vocationally and medically oriented centers supposedly make contributions used in work with the blind; but they reflect the distinct biases of their researchers and technicians. Thus, it requires little wisdom to anticipate that the eleven medically focused centers will tend to interpret rehabilitation physically and organically and will perceive their goals in terms of motor coordination, health, emotional adjustment, and the like. Such rehabilitation research,

constituting perhaps two-thirds of the total amount accomplished in the entire field, inevitably draws attention away from the basic vocational and social goals of rehabilitation in favor of medical and therapeutic solutions.

The point here is not that medical concepts and contributions are irrelevant to the work of rehabilitation. It is only that they are not *central* to the problem and the objective. The vital purpose, the overriding goal, of rehabilitation of the blind is to put the rehabilitant into society--not into the hospital. The first and fundamental requirement is to see him as a *client*, not as a *patient*. And when that is done, of course, the next requirement is to see him as a *person*, not merely as a client.

This emphasis on the person brings us to an issue which the recent escalation of research and demonstration has raised to the proportions of a crisis--which might well be labeled the "crisis of the individual." The dilemma I refer to is graphically symbolized by the congressional authorization in 1965 of a national data system in rehabilitation--under which computers are being developed to store, analyze, retrieve, and disseminate the vast amounts of scientific, industrial, professional, academic, technical, and other kinds of information cranked out for the supposed benefit of rehabilitation workers and administrators. The computerized data system is intended to be a national resource, available to all rehabilitation agencies and their staffs whenever they see fit to use it.

And it is, of course, a sure bet that they will see fit to use it often. Therein,

exactly, lies the dilemma and the crisis. For the sheer mass of all this so-called technical and seemingly scientific material--the intimidating bulk of it--is certain to come down in an avalanche of print and a flood of figures upon the desk of the counselor, directly between him and his client. In the vernacular of the profession, the "visibility" of the blind person on the other side of the desk is likely to decline in direct ratio to the volume of intervening literature.

In fact, this is no mere future possibility but a reality of the present. It is not too much to say that the client of rehabilitation, the disabled or distressed or disadvantaged person, is already the *forgotten man* of the program. He is forgotten in several senses of the term. He is ignored by workers and administrators intent upon processing data, filing reports, staffing the case, using the team approach, finalizing yesterday's conference, and briefing for tomorrow's. The disabled person is overlooked (as well as overseen) by counselors who perceive their role in the so-called "professional" terms of standardized procedures and ritualized tasks--a trend which has led to the widespread notion, for example, that anyone who ventures to work "overtime" in a given week (that is, more than thirty-five or forty hours) is guilty of "nonprofessional conduct," regardless of the human need or distress which tempted him to serve beyond the call of official duty.

There is yet another and more basic sense in which the person undergoing rehabilitation has become the forgotten man of the program. It is not only the sheer *quantity* of research which tends to bury the individual and drop him out of

sight. It is also the *quality* of the research which contributes to that result. For the more technically elaborate, the more jargonized and obsessed with trivia the research becomes, the greater is the threat it presents to the visibility, the identity, and the dignity of the disabled individual it is supposed to serve. At the hands of the pseudo-scientific fraternity of testers, computers, and idolators of research, the client of rehabilitation comes to be regarded not as a person but a case (or, worse, a case history). He begins to be defined not as a whole human being but as an assembly of drives, roles, mechanisms, symptoms, and intervening variables. He is no longer a man or a woman, but one-half of a dyad. He is not a unique person, one of a kind, with his own sorrows and yearnings; he has become an interchangeable unit, a member of a class, differing only slightly in the valence of his parameters, with a median rank of seven and a range of three.

Along with the neglect of the person in rehabilitation, and closely related to it, has gone the neglect of the original and paramount purpose of the program. It is not without significance that the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, as it used to be called, has now become the Rehabilitation Services Administration. What has been conveniently discarded in the shift of titles, you will note, is the term *vocational*. The omission is deliberate, and it is sinful.

Meanwhile (with the amendments of 1943, 1954, 1965, 1968, and 1969) so-called "services" of every variety run rampant through the Federal statute, and the idol of Research rears its stapled head in section after section of the law. The Act itself has now become so interminable, so

complicated, and so jargonized that only an expert at cryptography and linguistics could make sense of it. Everything, it seems, is embraced and subsidized in the program of rehabilitation--everything, that is, except the first and foremost reason for its being. With the disappearance of the term "*vocational*" has occurred the disembodyment of the substance. The forgotten purpose of the program--that of placement in remunerative and meaningful employment--has gone to join the forgotten client in the limbo of betrayed ideals.

No blind person--and no friend of the blind--can view without concern and alarm the trends in rehabilitation and welfare today. As the professional jargon, the so-called "research," and the Federal funds increase, the actual help for the individual seems to decrease. It is problems like this that have compelled us as blind people to organize and take a hand in our own programs. We can expect improvements in those programs only to the extent that we exert ourselves to make those improvements happen.

We are not children, and we are not helpless. We know our needs, and we know the means of achieving those needs. I, for one, believe we have the guts and the good sense to turn our dreams into realities. One way to do that is to insist that the public programs established to give us help do what they were intended to do. The increasing worship of the idols of professional jargon and pseudo-research will not contribute to the solution of our problems. The time is at an end when we are willing to allow our road to hell to be paved with the good intentions and misdirected activities of people who would be our keepers and custodians.

Let me be clearly understood. We do not condemn all of the professionals in work with the blind. Far from it. Many of them have done yeoman service, and continue to do it. They march side by side with us and help us achieve our goals. Further, we do not condemn true professionalism or meaningful research. These are essential in our struggle for self-realization. What we do condemn, what we do decry, and what we do not intend forever to tolerate are the Mickey Mouse tactics of self-proclaimed "professionals" who waste the public's money and our lives in childish prattle and foolish games, masquerading as scientists and humanitarians. Let the high-flown jargon and the pseudo-research go the way of the dinosaur, and let us as blind people move forward with determination and vigor to our rightful place in the mainstream of social and vocational achievement. This is the challenge we must face and the destiny we must go to meet. Let us meet it with confidence and conviction-but above all, let us meet it now!

FOOTNOTES

1. Anonymous, "The Little Star," *THE BOOK OF HUMOROUS VERSE*, comp. Carolyn Wells (Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., 1947), pp. 476-77.
2. James R. Masterson and Wendell Brooks Phillips, *FEDERAL PROSE: HOW TO WRITE IN AND/OR FOR WASHINGTON* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1948), p. 10.
3. Herbert Spencer, *FIRST PRINCIPLES* (New York: Appleton, 1864), p. 407.
4. Gilbert Highet, *THE ART OF TEACHING* (New York: Knopf, 1954), p. 233, quoting William James.
5. University of Utah, Regional Rehabilitation Research Institute, *Interpersonal Relationships: Factors in Job Placement*, Bulletin No. 3 (Salt Lake City: University Printing Service, 1968), p. 3.
6. Samuel H. Jameson, "Social Nearness Among Welfare Institutions," *Sociology and Social Research*, XV (March-April, 1931), p. 322.
7. John P. McGowan and Thomas L. Porter, *AN INTRODUCTION TO THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROCESS*, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Revised July, 1967 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 112, quoting Dr. Frederick C. Thorne.
8. University of Utah, Regional Rehabilitation Research Institute, *Interpersonal Relationships: Factors in Job Placement*, Bulletin No. 3 (Salt Lake City: University Printing Service, 1968), p. 42.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
12. John P. McGowan and Thomas L. Porter, *AN INTRODUCTION TO THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROCESS*, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Revised July,

1967 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 30.

13. David J. Weiss, Rene V. Dawis, George W. England, Lloyd H. Lofquist, and Richard S. Elster, *Construct Validation Studies of the Minnesota Importance Questionnaire*, Minnesota Studies in Vocational Rehabilitation: XVIII, Bulletin 41 (University of Minnesota, Dec., 1964), p. 27.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

17. John P. McGowan and Thomas L. Porter, *AN INTRODUCTION TO THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROCESS*, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Revised July, 1967 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 30.

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MONITOR MINIATURES

Tiny Beedle, president of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri, reports that a new chapter of her affiliate was organized in St. Joseph. A constitution was adopted and officers elected. Joan Davis was elected to serve as the president.

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Carl Jarvis, president of the Washington State Association of the Blind, writing in their publication *White Cane*, says: Some of us recently were privileged to attend the convention of the Gem State

Blind in Boise, Idaho. Kenneth Jernigan, our National President, was the main speaker. We need to consider some of his remarks in light of our own organizational efforts. "In order for the local organization to really keep the enthusiasm of the people, the local organization must think of itself as part of the State and part of the National movement. No local organization can do enough month to month isolated, to make it interesting and obviously worthwhile. There is a whole different light on things if every time a bill is passed nationally, we passed that bill, or every time a court case is won we won that case. As part of the National Federation we gain the strength, the experiences and the wisdom of blind people across the country. We in turn add our strength, experience and wisdom to the total picture. The problems of blindness are not confined by geographical boundaries. As long as one blind person is damaged anywhere, we all suffer. If one wins, we all win." NFB does an outstanding service for all of us with the material in *The Monitor* and other communications.

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Dr. Lester L. Coleman is a columnist with some forty million readers. The following is reprinted by courtesy of King Features Syndicate, Inc. and was written by Dr. Coleman: The news of the possibility that the totally blind may yet be able to see has understandably called forth hundreds of letters from readers. When first I wrote about such a scientific possibility, it seemed as impossible as a lunar landing. Now both are realities. Let me bring you up to date on the progress of electronic sight for the blind. A complete electronic mechanism can be implanted in

the skull. Images can then be sent to the brain from a small television camera. The camera sees, and then sends a message through the electronic equipment finally going to the visual center of the brain. A number of important hospitals all over the United States are performing this remarkable implant, which is based on experiments originally performed in England in 1968. These experiments are no longer in the realm of pure speculation. If funds can be made available, refinements of these brilliantly conceived devices will progress rapidly. No research project of such significance should be delayed or hampered by inadequate private and governmental monies. The sightless will yet be able to see.

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The Internal Revenue Service has recently ruled that the unreimbursed cost of reader services for a blind person may be deducted as a medical expense. This means that the cost of such services in excess of three percent of adjusted gross income may be deducted in computing annual income taxes.

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The Department of HEW reports that the national costs of welfare skyrocketed a record twenty-seven percent in the fiscal year ending last June 30th despite a shrinking of relief rolls in the last two months. Expenditures for all forms of public assistance, including medical aid and welfare, increased \$3.4 billion to \$16.3 billion in the twelve months of the past fiscal year. The total is almost double the \$8.9 billion four years ago. Last June there were 14.3 million recipients.

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Most blind persons in the U. S. are between 55 and 80 years of age and only two percent are children under 18; yet of the eight hundred agencies serving the blind in this country, two-thirds have programs aimed chiefly at children and young adults and less than ten percent have programs exclusively for the elderly blind.

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The Month's News, publication of the Illinois Congress of the Blind, contains the following philosophical observations: "In retrospect, one cannot help but be astonished at the vast, philosophical gulf which so often during the convention sessions separated the blind audience, on the one hand, from the agency representatives, on the other. Clearly, we were not speaking the same language; for while to us, equality, independence and integration are indivisible and absolute, to many of our panel guests, these goals and ideals were constantly hedged by conditions, caveats and qualifications, and the ifs and buts of unconvinced believers. From this, one might have concluded that our task is insurmountable and the battle is lost. Far from it! For the overriding highlight of the convention was that so many of us who, a short three years ago, were content to lie dormant under the protectionist eye and custodial hand (not to say stick) of our State agencies, today felt no qualms whatsoever about rising up to voice our complaints, air our criticism and point in a new direction. Thus, the gulf in attitudes between servers and consumers in Illinois' system of services to the blind only *seems* wider than it was at our inaugural meeting; like an iceberg, its true extent is only now becoming apparent, and it is being revealed by the

more penetrating thrust of our insight and the greater lift of our collective spirit."

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Mary Hartle of Minnesota writes that one of the most up and coming student divisions is the Minnesota Organization of Blind Student Division. In July Conrad Balfour, the executive director of the Minneapolis Urban Coalition, spoke to the group on the need for the students to become advocates in order to effect needed changes. With the aid of the parent MOB, the student division was able to stamp out one discriminatory practice. As *Monitor* readers will recall reading in the March issue, St. Cloud State College has had a policy of denying blind students the right to be admitted to the School of Education. After some negotiating, much waiting on our part, and much stalling on their part, we took the matter to the State College Board System, which governs all State Colleges. On August 26, 1971, a letter was received from the Academic Affairs Office of the Minnesota State College System in which it was stated: "We have discussed this matter with Dr. Applegate at St. Cloud State College. The policy at St. Cloud State College in teacher education has changed, and handicapped students may apply for admission on the same basis as any other student." It should be noted that we have been working on this issue for nine months and that the discriminatory policy has existed for about ten years. This victory is also another proof that we, the organized blind, can and do solve our problems without the help of the agencies. While the State agency should have led the fight as advocates of the rights of blind people, it only got involved after we had initiated the action, and then in the end it

was not the agency's involvement but our own which brought about the policy change. Mary says she doesn't want to have to write about her own State student division every month so asks that other student groups send her some information for publication. Her address is Mary Hartle, Box 124, College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, Minnesota, 56374.

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In the fiscal year 1970, about 15.5 million persons received medical care financed from public assistance funds. The cost was \$4.8 billion. Total expenditures for payments to medical vendors under all programs were up more than \$545 million or about 12.5 percent in 1970 from 1969. Of this total annual increase, however, an estimated \$266 million, almost one half might be attributed to higher medical prices as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

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Santa has many helpers at Christmas time and two of his musicians live in Alexandria, Virginia. Robert and Marion McDonald (presidents of the Virginia Federation of the Blind and the Potomac Federation of the Blind respectively) are musicians for Santa and accompany him when he arrives in Alexandria by a special RF & P railroad train the first Saturday after Thanksgiving each year.

Children of all ages come from miles around the Old Dominion to ride on the annual Santa Claus train. This is a real fifteen car train owned by the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad and sponsored by the local J. C. Penney Company as their contribution to the

opening of the holiday season in Alexandria. More than 73,000 children have enjoyed this special treat during the twelve years it has made its annual trip.

The Santa Train leaves Alexandria Union Station for four two-hour trips on this special Saturday and it is a real fun day for the youngsters. Each car has a Santa Claus Hostess, Kena Temple Klowns are there to blow up the balloons and make all kinds of animals from them and wandering musicians pass through the cars playing carols.

After everyone is on board the train starts on its trip to pick up Santa Claus. This is the first time many of the kids have been on a train, much less taken a ride on one and the air is just filled with excitement as the children press their noses against the train windows to be the first to see Santa. Sometimes he is waiting beside his sleigh or on a housetop, but he is always there wearing his bright red suit and with a bag full of toys.

At the first sound of the jingling bells the kids suddenly become very quiet and just wait for that magic moment when Santa will come through the door. The musicians come first and the kids all join in singing Here Comes Santa Claus, Jingle Bells, and Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. The idea is not to sing well, but just loud. Next comes Santa with his Ho-Ho-Ho's and stopping to shake the hands of each of his little guests, and with the help of the Santa Hostess gives each child a bag of goodies.

Marion and Mac really enjoy this yearly trip as they both love children and enjoy singing and in just being a part of the thrilling experience of these many

children who will always remember that special day when they met Santa Claus and all his helpers in person.

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Ruth Goodwin of Greater Brockton writes that on Sunday, September 26, chapter members were invited to take part in a bowling tournament sponsored by the East Bridgewater, Massachusetts Lions Club. It is anticipated that this was the first of a series of annual bowling tournaments to be held Statewide by the Lions Clubs. Mr. Raymond Tardy of East Bridgewater, then King Lion, was the author of this program and although ably assisted by a fine committee, it took several months of planning and hard work to formulate all the plans. Mr. Tardy's co-chairman was Mr. Michael Kennedy. Always ready and willing to lend a hand, these wonderful friends not only arranged the program, but with the able assistance of their wives, the committee prepared and served a delicious roast beef dinner which followed the contest.

Mr. James Studley, owner of the Carlysle Club in nearby Whitman, provided the alleys, as a matter of fact practically turned over the entire facilities of his club for the afternoon and evening. This included the banquet room as well. The prizes were divided between men and women with the two top bowlers receiving appropriate trophies and a cash prize, and the next five winners received cash prizes, each category bringing matching amounts. But, no one went away empty handed--there was a consolation prize for everyone.

It was a wonderful party and such fun. We are all looking forward to next

year. Oh yes, we were asked to invite other bowlers from the Fall River, Watertown and Boston chapters and several of them captured prizes as well. As always, our faithful sighted friends and guides were on hand to keep things moving smoothly and their presences added greatly to our pleasure.

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Students of the Idaho Commission for the Blind recently "entertained the entertainers" at an afternoon coffee hour. Several members of "Up With People," a singing and dancing group, were served cookies and coffee made by the Home Economics Department of the Commission. Commission Director

Kenneth Hopkins spoke briefly to the group, giving them some Federation philosophy to digest. Jan Omvig, who had a cast member as a house guest, received many phone calls from others in the group asking questions and making comments about the Commission program. In return "Up With People" performed several numbers from their regular concert program. The group is composed of young persons between the ages of seventeen and twenty-six. Through their concerts, they are stressing individualism and attempting to bring people together by promoting better understanding of their fellow man. Both the Commission and cast members were pleased with the afternoon. Perhaps this encounter will serve to spread Federationism throughout the world.

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