The GCB DIGEST

This is a publication of the Georgia Council of the Blind

WE are an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind

An organization promoting a hand up and not a handout

Winter 2020

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Table of Contents:

From Your Editor, by Amanda Wilson

Presidential Message, by Alice Ritchhart

GCB Board Meeting Minutes, by Betsy Grenevitch

Member profile: Elizabeth Cantrell

GCB Chapter News

Georgia Guide Dog Users News, by Betsy Grenevitch

In Memory Of: Melvin Turner

My Ireland Trip, by Judy Presley

Update on Thomas Tommy Woodyard

“A SPOONFUL OF HUMOR HELPS THE MEDICINE GO DOWN” By Janet Di Nola Parmerter

Thoughts from Readers, by Mike Hall

Recipe: Ham and Cheese Omelet in a bag, by Ron Worley

I-phone Apps, by Ron Worley

Apply for a GCB and ACB Scholarship, by Marj Schneider

\*\*\*\*\*From Your Editor,

By Amanda Wilson

Hello GCB Family. We thank each one who has submitted articles in this issue of our magazine. If you have any change of home or email address, telephone number, or desired change of format, please inform our GCB treasurer. Thanks to everyone who makes our GCB Digest such a big success. I particularly want to thank Janet Parmerter, assistant editor, for the many hours she has worked on the magazine and her editing skills. Also, I want to thank our president, Alice Ritchhart, for her presidential message with information about important events, legislation and projects. Lastly, I want to express appreciation for the contributions from our new GCB digest committee and to each member who sent articles and made suggestions.

Note:

From this point forward, please send any comments, articles or messages to the GCB Digest editor in Font: Arial, Font Style: Bold, Font Size: 16 point, Font Heading Size: 20 point and please underline the Heading. This will make things more consistent for reading and for Braille. Thank You,

Amanda Wilson

\*\*\*\*\*Presidential Message:

By Alice Ritchhart

Let me begin by saying, I hope you all had a blessed and safe holiday season. 2020 begins a new decade and year. As the new era begins, I would like to share my thoughts regarding my vision for GCB as we start this decade. In Georgia, we know the past ten years brought many changes for those of us who are blind, or have low vision. Unfortunately, they were not positive changes since much was lost over the past decade. First, we lost the previous ground made regarding services for those who have sensory disabilities. Second, we seem to have also lost our motivation to make change. In this regard, I am talking about all those who have a stake in what happens to those of us who are blind or low vision individuals. Part of it, I think, is due to our frustration at having made steps forward to improve services and making us more inclusive in our communities, only to having our work stripped away by the, “Lift and Shift” of GVRA services from DOL, to an independent agency. They forgot to “lift and shift” those of us with sensory disabilities. Third, I think we lost ground because we allowed the government and GVRA to conquer and divide our community. We began fighting among ourselves. There was no trust between service providers, our organizations and even among our own organization. When a house is divided it will fall! The state counted on that to happen and they succeeded. Finally, I think GCB itself has gone through its own challenges. Recently, we have lost many of our former advocates and those who want to help are just not sure how to do it. Therefore, if we are going to make a difference in the next decade, we must figure out what to do to make sure that we regain ground and move Georgia forward. In this way, all of us who are blind, low vision, or have other sensory disabilities will be able to become active and independent members of our community. It means first and most important, we must all come together as one and must have solidarity. This means all sensory organizations and service providers for those with sensory disabilities must stand together, work together and not let the state divide us. It means fighting for a separate agency, which means a Commission for the Blind, not merely a division. It means sharing your stories and speaking out regarding our needs. It means helping each other so that we can survive. The second part of that means better communication among our community. I am not just talking about sharing ideas, but also listening to one another. This would include trying to find compromise among our community without compromising what it is we want, as well as what it is, we need as a community. Finally we need to figure out a way to help those who truly want to help but lack the skills to do so. In summary, I would say to all of you, among the GCB, let’s communicate together and develop goals to accomplish the task at hand. Again to emphasize that goal I will repeat the goal. It is to improve the services in Georgia by getting a Commission for the Blind so that we can be an inclusive part of the Georgia community.

\*\*\*\*\*Georgia Council of the Blind Board Meeting minutes:

By Betsy Grenevitch

Georgia Council of the Blind Board Meeting

Decatur Recreation Center

August 17, 2019

OrCam Representative, Chris Braswell:

Since our guest speaker, OrCam Representative Chris Braswell, was on a tight schedule, he spoke to us while we were waiting for more board members to arrive. The cost of the OrCam is either $3500 or $4500. The first one can only read items and the second one can also recognize faces, money, and read bar codes. It is a small wearable device that has several magnetic mounts that will hold it on any pair of glasses. It does not require an internet connection to work. There is a small camera in the front and the microphone is just behind your ear. The OrCam lets you know when a person is in front of you and reads phones, computer screens, restaurant menus, signage, etc. There are only two buttons, the on/off button and the command slide bar has voice commands and connects to a blue tooth device. The only glasses that are not recommended with it are wire-rimmed glasses because they are too thin for the device to attach onto the eyeglass rim. OrCam operates in 20 different languages, but only reads the language and does not translate the language. The battery lasts for about 1.5 to two hours of continuous use and comes with a wall charger and a portable battery charger. CreditAble is a possible source for obtaining a loan to purchase the OrCam.

Call to Order:

The meeting formerly began at 10:30 AM.

Invocation, Fred McDade:

As part of the invocation we had a moment of silence in honor of Harvey Roberts.

Roll Call, Betsy Grenevitch:

The board members present were: Alice Ritchhart, GCB President; Phil Jones GCB First Vice-President; Jamaica Miller, GCB Second Vice-President; Betsy Grenevitch, Secretary; Marsha Farrow, GCB Treasurer; DJ McIntyre, Member-at-large representative; Keith Morris, GCB past President; Jerrie Toney, Athens; Deborah Lovell, Augusta—by phone; Patricia Ganger, East Georgia—by phone; Dianne Roberts, Greater Hall County; Fred McDade, chaplain; Tonia Clayton, Rome-Floyd County; Marj Schneider, Savannah; Chester Thrash, South Atlanta; Teresa Brenner, Georgia Guide Dog Users; Steve Longmire, Webmaster; and Amanda Wilson, Digest editor. Guests present were Cecily Nipper, Sr., East Georgia; Rosetta Brown, East Georgia; Cathy Morris, Augusta; Charles Stubblefield, Northwest; Joe James, Athens; Patty Smith, Northwest; Hoyal Presley, Greater Hall County; Judy Presley, Greater Hall County; and Tiyah Longmire, South Atlanta.

President’s Report, Alice Ritchhart:

Alice Ritchhart is still receiving calls concerning lack of transportation in different parts of the state and also receiving calls inquiring about what services are available in Georgia. Alice and the president of the NFB of Georgia are doing regular calls with Denine Woodson and Shirley Robinson. They were told that Shawn Casey was impressed with how the Alliance meeting ran. Previously Shawn had asked us to give him time to fix things in VR. He said that they will not stop us from wanting a commission and that they would support us. He told Denine and Shirley to stop making excuses for VR. Consultants are coming in to look at the system and how to improve it. They are too top-heavy on the administration side so there will be some furloughs and are going to try to speed up the process of hiring a new counselor. GIB seems to be going under, so they are working on this right away. They still have the contract where blind and/or visually impaired people can call who are seeking VR services. Alice would like for us to put this number on our Facebook page and on our website. For every 400 consumers there is only one counselor in the state of Georgia. There are only 87 counselors in the state of Georgia for all disabilities. We had several from Georgia attend the national ACB conference and convention. There were several resolutions passed and one of them is to figure out what to do with people who are age 24 to 55, in order to help them receive the services they need if they are not going to work. They are also working on more funding for the older blind program. The third thing is working on certification for those who want to become VRTs, TVIs and/or O&M instructors. ACB has joined the Aging & Vision Loss National Coalition. She wants us to let the group know that GCB is supportive of this group. VisionServe Alliance has taken over this group from the American Foundation for the Blind.

Secretary’s Report, Betsy Grenevitch:

Deborah Lovell made a motion which was seconded by Jerrie Toney that the minutes be approved as they were emailed. The motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report, Marsha Farrow:

Our three major expenditures each year are the conference and convention, membership dues and the liability insurance. Main checking account: The current balance is $4412.21. Within this account we have funds for the senior support account. This fund currently had $37099.14 until some checks were written. We also have funds for the Martha Craig Memorial Fund in the amount of $361.61. This money will be going to the Georgia Association for the Deaf-Blind. She would like this money to be used for support services personnel by this association. We were able to help three individuals receive items that they needed with the Senior Support Fund. This fund is based on donations and we have had some very generous donors. We have provided transportation, devices, and people being able to attend events such as Dining in the dark, etc. This fund helps those who are 55 and above. In our operating fund we currently have $575.51. Conference Account: The current balance is $1080.40. Al and Cora Camp Scholarship Account: The current balance is $3958.10. We no longer receive money from the Way Financial account. We will only touch the Way Financial account as we need it for scholarships. Money Market Account: The current balance is $5742.20. Long-term Investment: The current balance is $18,401.11. Way Financial: Marsha would like to get opinions concerning whether we are receiving what is the best rate for this account. For the past three months, our balances are, May--$64,265.53; June--$66,086.88 and July--$63,034.12. In order to cover our liability insurance, which is coming due In October, we may be moving $500 from the money market account. Some expenses coming up are $40, for a few more members, around $84 for Go Daddy, and today’s fee for the Recreation Center meeting. Marsha asked the report to be filed for audit, which was seconded by Fred. Marj wanted to know if some of the scholarship fund should be invested but the concern was that if we invest the funds then they are tied up for a period of time and cannot be used. Marj was also concerned about us not receiving more interest from the money market account. Marsha said that she is going to check into what can be done to gain more interest.

Finance Report, Jerrie Toney:

DJ read the minutes from the finance committee meeting. The finance committee recommended that we get a sighted person, who is a bookkeeper to oversee the books. Phil made a motion that we get a bookkeeper and the motion was seconded by Jamaica. The motion was amended to include that this would be a paid position. Phil agreed to the amendment and it was seconded by Deborah. This position would be three hours a month except for when conference and conventions are held. Marsha felt we need to come up with a job description for this position. The motion carried. The second recommendation was to have a reader to read the checks to Betsy from the bank statements. Marsha made the motion that Betsy has a reader to read her the checks from the bank statements and the motion was seconded by Tonia. Marsha amended the motion which was seconded by Tonia to reflect that the reader would be compensated. The motion carried.

Each month the board will receive bank statements.

Transportation Committee, Phil Jones:

They had a call on Monday evening. He would like chapters to discuss whether they could start their own transportation services. His chapter, the East Georgia chapter, had tried to start a transportation service. He is going to speak with Linda cox to find out what they did when trying to begin this service. They made the mistake of donating funds to an individual with the option of the person paying them back and the funds were never paid back. Those on the call discussed a possibility of opening a transit account for the state and/or chapters. They could try to get corporations behind them in beginning a transportation service. Marsha suggested that we find out how the IT Lanier Company is run. Jamaica has a program called Wheels of Hope and they are hoping that all counties will eventually have transportation. She will be informing Phil how this program was begun. Alice suggested that someone from this company could come and speak to us at our next board meeting to help us understand how it works. United Way and the Extension Club will help with free grant writing. Teresa told us that Senior Citizens Inc. in Savannah provides volunteer drivers to take people places.

Advocacy/Legislative committee, Teresa Brenner and Tonia Clayton:

There will be training with the new voting machines. It is recommended that each member get on a committee in their local area for the Board of Elections to make sure the voting machines are accessible. HR4129: This bill is being discussed to make sure there is Medicare coverage for low vision devices. This would help people be able to afford such things as video magnifiers. Alice recommended that we call our Congressmen and let them know that we would like them to support this bill. Accessible Gym Equipment, Steve: Steve told us about the bill before the Senate that concerns accessible equipment at gyms. There is a meeting with Sen. Isaakson’s office on August 19 at 10:00 AM to make him understand why this bill would be important. Service ‘Animals: Recommendations have come down concerning service animals flying. You no longer have to give a 48-hour notice unless the flight is over eight hours. They can only ask the two main questions. You only have to show the health and shot records if the dog looks dangerous. They cannot restrict breeds or the size of dogs. They will be taking public comments by the end of August or in September. There are now several states that have a fake service animal law.

Technology Committee, Steve Longmire:

Thursday, they held their meeting and some of the discussion concerned making the GCB website more accessible. They also talked about updates for programs that could benefit blind/visually impaired individuals.

Youth Committee, Cecily Nipper, Sr.:

She read the minutes from the call that was held in July. They hope to advertise the next event at the upcoming conference and convention at the offices of ophthalmologists.

Fundraising Committee, DJ McIntyre:

Our current ongoing fundraisers are Kroger Rewards and Amazon Smiles.

Some recent sources of fundraisers were auction--$872; smoothie sales--$84.50; coffee sold during the conference and convention--$64.60; Split pot--$61; and the GCB gear but we do not have a total from this fundraiser.

Membership Committee, Amanda Wilson:

They meet once a quarter. As of August 1 we have 179 members. You can begin paying your dues now. Chapters are having picnics, meetings, and getting the community to draw in more members.

Digest Committee, Amanda Wilson:

They will be having a meeting next week to discuss the upcoming issue of \_The \_GCB \_Digest.

Senior Report, Marsha Farrow:

This year, we paid for three individuals to attend the GCB conference and convention. Also, we supported an individual to attend the Dining in the Dark event sponsored by Vision Rehabilitation Services. The fund can also help with transportation needs. Two listening devices were also purchased for two individuals as well as low vision eyeglasses for someone in Athens. If you know of anyone who has real needs who are 55 and above, please contact the committee. The person receiving help does not have to be a member of GCB.

GGDU, Teresa Brenner:

GGDU would like to work with the advocacy/legislative committee on a fake service animal bill.

Conference and Convention Task Force, Marj Schneider:

Marj thanked those who were on the committee with her and met on July 25th. Her committee members were Marsha, Cecily Jr., DJ and Patricia. A previous committee had recommended spring dates and shorter conference and conventions. This committee is recommending that we have a fall and spring conference and convention that would coincide with GCB board meetings. They are suggesting that this be an evening and a day event. One conference and convention would emphasize exhibitors and one would be sessions. One of these events would be held in the north and one would be held in the southern part of the state. The idea would be that we return to the same location each year. The emphasis of the conference and convention would swap each year. The committee is recommending that a search committee be formed to bring potential locations to the October board meeting. They are hoping that exhibitors would attract younger people to the conference and convention. The advantage for holding the conference and convention at the same place each year is that, in advance, people could plan for the cost and transportation. The committee is also recommending live streaming and/or recording the sessions for those who are not able to attend. Alice clarified that one of these conference and conventions would have to be held in conjunction with a membership meeting and not a board meeting. The board meeting at the one which has the membership meeting would be held long enough just to decide the place of the next board meeting. Marsha made the motion to develop a search committee to establish the details for the conference and conventions in 2020 and the motion was seconded by Chester Thrash. The motion carried. Marj’s committee is now dissolved.

NCG chapter, Alice Ritchhart:

In a previous meeting we had discussed this chapter not following our constitution. They did not have five members, had not sent in their check to our treasurer, and had not been attending board meetings. They were supposed to be here today to hold a hearing but instead a letter of resignation was received. We will be requesting their charter back from them but cannot request anything else, since they did not have the words, “Council of the Blind”, in their chapter name. Betsy read the letter that Alice wrote to them and Bronwyn Rumery, their president’s response. Phil made the motion that GCB accept the resignation of the North Central Georgia chapter from GCB and the motion was seconded by Patricia. Patricia also mentioned that she found the letter was extremely rude and she was somewhat affronted by their tone. The motion carried. Alice said that this chapter needs to come off the website, Facebook page, the brochure, and that Betsy will ask them to send back their charter. Dianne wanted to know if we could ask this chapter for their $100 back in the letter requesting their charter and accepting their resignation from GCB. She made a motion, when the letter goes out to accept their resignation that we politely ask for the $100 and Chester seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Search committee for locations of the future conference and convention:

The members appointed on this committee are Patricia, Marj, Deborah, Tonia and Cecily, Jr. Marj will be the chair of this committee. They will give us a report at the next board meeting.

Committees, Alice:

Alice explained that committees are formed to do the work of the organization between board meetings. Most of the committees should be meeting more than quarterly—at least bimonthly. The legislative and conference and convention committees should be meeting monthly. The membership committee should be coming up with ideas of how to gain more members such as having monthly activities, visiting chapters, etc. Phil reminded everyone that any GCB member can attend these committee meetings. Teresa wanted to know if an affiliate can be started for visually impaired TVIs. Alice said that she will be speaking at GVEST so could try and find more names for this potential affiliate.

Georgia Vision Alliance, Alice:

The next meeting for the Georgia Vision Alliance will be held on September 7, 2019 from 9:00 AM-2:00 pm. They will be meeting in Augusta at Saint Mark’s Methodist Church. They are hoping to get the Commission Bill dropped in January. The group will be forming committees at the next meeting. GARRS was at the June meeting and played it back later. We have a Facebook page [www.facebook.com/GeorgiaVisionAlliance](http://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaVisionAlliance). It is a closed group. This group will have announcements of upcoming meetings, what the Alliance is working on, and any information related to Georgia and services for the blind and deaf-blind in Georgia. You can also join a mass email list by writing to Alice and letting her know you want to join it. Lunch at the meeting will be from Chick-fil-A and will cost $10. The hotel rooms are available at the Doubletree by Hilton on Premier Parkway in Augusta. The room rate is $122.28 plus tax per night. The reservations can be made until August 22. The hotel has a full restaurant. There is a service charge of $30 per night which will be removed the minute you check out.

Aging & Vision Loss National Coalition, Alice:

Alice would like to see GCB sign on as a supporter of the goals of this coalition. Teresa made the motion seconded by Chester that we write a letter in support of the goals of the Aging & Vision Loss National Coalition. The motion carried.

Announcements

Deborah announced an event being held at the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center will be taking place on White Cane Day on October 15, 2019 from 9:00 AM-1:00 pm. The new voting machine will be there as well as other technology for the blind and a Braille flag. The East Georgia chapter is talking about having a White Cane Day celebration on the second Saturday in October.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 1:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Betsy Grenevitch, Secretary

\*\*\*\*\*GCB Member Profile: Elizabeth Cantrell

By Rosetta Brown

The East Georgia Chapter is elated to introduce Elizabeth Cantrell. She recently joined our ranks.

“My name is Elizabeth Cantrell and I love being a member of the East Georgia Chapter of the Georgia Council of the Blind. We have a wonderful group of members and host lively and enriching meetings. It was my good fortune to meet long time members, Pat Slade and her son Nick Slade through Newton County Schools. They introduced me to our chapter, and I am so glad they did. As a Teacher of the Visually Impaired for Newton County Schools, I get to travel around to schools and work with students with vision needs every day. This is my 13th school year here in our county and my second year working with this group of students. Every day, they always find so many ways to amaze and inspire me that I learn so much from my students, who range in ages from 4 to 19.

Throughout the day, my role changes from teacher, to coach, to storyteller, to cheerleader, to Braille transcriber, to evaluator and finally to their collaborator. To work with such a wonderful group of students and other special education team members makes me truly grateful. Each day our rally cry is, “Our Abilities Outweigh Our Disabilities.”

\*\*\*\*\*GCB Chapter News

Athens Chapter:

The Athens Council of the Blind held its holiday luncheon on Saturday, December 7th, 2019. Members in attendance and guests enjoyed seafood and hamburgers at the Blind Pig Tavern located in downtown Athens. The chapter appreciated this opportunity to socialize and have fun!

For our first meeting of 2020, we will be hosting a guest speaker from NFB Newsline. The Athens chapter meetings are held on the fourth Saturday, at MULTIPLE Choices, located at 145 Barrington Drive in Athens, Georgia from 10:30 AM until 12:00 pm. For more information about the Athens chapter, please contact Jerrie Toney at 706-461-1013, or via email at jerriemt2@gmail.com.

Augusta Chapter: The Augusta chapter reported that our chapter has been reduced by a couple members because Mark and Kay Armstrong moved away to another state.  Yet, we still have a strong representation of 10 members. On the sixteenth of November, we catered a dinner and brought the food to those at the

Veteran’s Hospital.  In addition, we incorporated a technology exposure to them in the area of iPhone, iPad, other Apple products and explained differences between various smart speakers.  The presentation and dinner appeared to be a success and was well received by all!

In December, at Deborah Lovell’s home, we had our Christmas Party where we had dinner and white elephant gift sharing. Once a quarter, or so, our chapter also reaches out to the o the community of citizens becoming blind in our area by means of a technology social. Our subcommittee brings a topic to the table and then we open the floor to help answer other questions from participants. We have contacted a representative from the transportation department that handles accessibility to see if she could address some issues about our bus system in the Augusta area.  She shared with us the method of how special requests are processed and what would be the best method for submitting our type of requests to make sure they are addressed and followed up.  It was a good meeting and she as vary insightful and knowledgeable about our needs. The Augusta chapter meetings are held on the second Saturday, at the Friedman Branch Library, 1447 Jackson Road, Augusta, Georgia from 10:00 AM until 12:00 pm. For more information, please contact Deborah Lovell at 706-726-4054, or via email at lovell.d2000@gmail.com.

East Georgia Chapter:

The East Georgia Chapter reported that at our September meeting, Dorothy Griffin, from NFBNewsline was our Speaker. She shared many ways NFBNewsline can be accessed and utilized. Several people signed up to use Newsline services. In October, we celebrated White Cane Safety Day on Saturday, October 12, 2019 and celebrated by wearing T-shirts designed solely for us by BEJ’s, Brandy Era Jones Jarrard, Design Company. All Blind/Low vision/Deaf Blind people and Blind organizations, serving this population, were invited to join us by walking down Main Street in Conyers Georgia. The “White Cane Safety Day” is a monumental event which started at the Conyers Presbyterian Church, 911 Main Street, Northwest in Conyers, Georgia. The meeting was held on Saturday, October 12, 2019 from 10:00 AM until 12:00 pm. AT our November meeting we herd from Cecily Nipper Junior, accompanied by Cecily Nipper Senior, who introduced us to the Art of Butter making. Each person produced their own Crock of butter to take home. In December, WE held our Christmas party on December 14 from 10 a.m.-noon. We welcome our newest members, Mieshona Moses and her son Cordarian. In January of 2020, Sara Maddox will compete in many Special Olympics events in Athens, Georgia. The East Georgia chapter meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month from 10:00 AM until 12:00 pm. at the Conyers Presbyterian Church, 911 NW, Main Street NE, in Conyers Georgia. For more information, please contact Patricia Ganger at 770-853-2040, or via email at Patricia.Ganger@outlook.com.

Greater Hall County Chapter:

The Greater Hall County Chapter reported that at our August, we heard from Cody Jeffers of Atlanta Vision Tech. He introduced "Cyber Eyes", a smart technology device for people with low vision and is available to demonstrate for groups. Anyone can learn more at his website:  [www.cybertimez.com](http://www.cybertimez.com). In September, after our business was conducted, we heard from Dawn Wells from Angel Eyes Fitness. After the business meeting, though time was short and most had to leave, Dawn still spoke to six people and showed them exercises used by belly dancers. A fun time was enjoyed by all participants! In October, we heard from Dorothy Griffin, from the National Federation of the Blind, who spoke about eh NFB Newsline and the free services offered. In November, we heard from Jason Bombay of Visual Enhancements, who demonstrated and displayed some of the newest vision aids and technology available. We held and used the small items and Jason coached others using the larger technology items. For more information: contact visual Enchancements at: 1-877-236-7092. Or visit their website at: www.visualenhancements.com. In December, we had our Christmas party at O'Charley's in Gainesville. We partnered with Gainesville Lions Club and collected two large bags of children's gifts to donate to the Chattahoochee Baptist Association and their Secret Santa Program. Thirty three people were in attendance as we sang Christmas songs and enjoyed fellowship with not only our members, but with the Lions Club and special visitors. At our January 11, 2020 meeting, we will have a representative from the office of the Secretary of State who will bring a new voting machine and demonstrate how the visually impaired can use it. We encourage and welcome both members and visitors to attend this meeting. The Greater Hall County chapter meetings are held on the second Saturday, at the Smokey Springs Retirement Residence, 940 South Enota Drive, Gainesville, Georgia from 10:30 AM until 12:00 pm. For more information about the Chapter, please contact Diane Roberts at 770-932-1112, or via email at harveyroberts2@att.net.

Northwest Chapter:

The Northwest chapter reported that at their September meeting they heard from Michelle Blaylock and Robyn Levinthal, both teachers of the Visually Impaired and are employed by the Walker County School System. Michelle Blaylock, who recently became an Orientation and Mobility instructor, and her colleague Robin, are both passionate about changing the presence of the visually impaired in our community. The lengthy discussion considered how our group and the school system could work symbiotically to improve our surroundings and the mindset of both individuals who are blind and sighted. New transportation ideas were discussed and how we could best mimic training facilities located in more populated areas. Also in attendance was our speaker for next month, Rebecca Clark, who works with Kaleidoscope, a local facilitator of Independent advancement for individuals with disabilities and the supporting employment and marketing coordinator. In October, we herd from, Mountain Community Services, who offer employment services to those with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The first blind individual whom they have assisted is Angela Zimmerman and they look forward to helping many more individuals. They offer supported employment in which the individual is assisted in finding employment suitable to their needs. The process is not rushed and a staff member stays with the new hire until they know their job and are fully comfortable. Most clients keep their jobs for many years and the program has been quite successful. Angela also spoke about her experiences losing her vision due to Stargardt's disease, her education at EH Gentry and her present life. Now, this determined and kind individual enjoys her swim classes. In November, we held our business meeting and herd from Secretary Bethany Leigh, as well as Treasurer, Charles Stubblefiel. Currently, we have seventeen members, seven of whom are blind or visually impaired. The announcement was made that our Christmas party will be on Thursday, December 5, 2019, at 2:00 at the Dairy Dip in Lafayette, Georgia and encouraged each member to bring a five dollar ornament to participate in a gift exchange. It was a huge success as we all brought gifts to exchange and Pagiel played songs that included a fun topic song made up on the spot, called, “Oh No, Mistletoe”. The topic was suggested by Angela Zimmerman, then, Matt Henderson joined our chapter and Sharon Nichols received a surprise visit from her daughter and granddaughter then ended reading a card received from one of our new members, Mark Sharp. The Northwest chapter meetings are held on the second Tuesday, at the Lafayette-Walker Library 305 South Duke Street, in Lafayette, Georgia from 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm. For more information, please contact Fred McDade at 706-278-4084, or via email at nwgachaptergcb@gmail.com.

Rome Floyd County Chapter:

The Rome Floyd County chapter reported that at our August meeting, Barry Vaughn, our Chaplin, requested a Moment of Silence for remembering Suzanne Jackson’s husband and George Barton’s brother-in-law, Danny Jackson who was a Vietnam Veteran. Amanda Wilson utilized her phone and Bluetooth speaker to connect via phone with ACB President Dan Spoone and his wife Leslie Spoone. This was a great opportunity, not only to hear from our ACB President and Leslie, but to have several questions address from the Members of the Rome Chapter. The Spoones shared information about their personal vision loss and how they met and married after attending a conference of RP Fighting Blindness. They spoke of their various responsibilities in the Florida Council of the Blind, FCB, and American Council of the Blind, ACB. President Dan Spoone encouraged Barry Vaughn and Tonia Clayton to provide input on the new audio National Parks Program, so visually impaired individuals can enjoy virtual audio tours. Marsha Farrow brought Georgia Council of the Blind, GCB, Water Bottles, and the money from the purchased $5 each was donated to the Chapter Funds. At our September meeting we heard from Mandy Maloney of the US Census Bureau. Barry shared his ideas about giving thanks to the staff at the State Park Managers employed at the sloppy Floyd State Park in Summerville, Georgia. Luke and other employees assisted Campers at the August 2019 LIONS Camp and made everyone feel welcomed at the camp, where Park Employees helped make the Camp more enjoyable. At our October meeting, we celebrated White Cane Safety Day at the Landmark Restaurant in Rome, Georgia and heard from Rome Police Officer David McGuire about pedestrian safety. K. T. McKee, from the Rome Tribune , came to our meting and wrote an article about people with visual impairments walking around in Rome, Georgia with White Canes or Guide Dogs. In November we held our business meeting. In December, we had our annual Christmas luncheon. On the piano, George Barton played beautiful Christmas Carols and Suzanne Jackson read to us from the book, “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever.”

The Rome Floyd County chapter meetings are held on the third Tuesday at the Rome Floyd County Library, 205 Riverside Parkway, Rome, Georgia from 11:00 AM until 1:00 pm. For more information, please contact Tonia Clayton, at 706-346-8940, or via email at toniaclayton@comcast.net.

Savannah Chapter:

The Savannah chapter continues to hold its monthly meetings on the third Thursday of each month and the time is still 6:00 pm until 7:30 pm. The location continues to be the conference room at J. C. Lewis Ford, 9505 Abercorn Street. This past Saturday, d we held our holiday party the 14th, in the party room at the apartment complex where Teresa Brenner now lives and had ample room to mingle with family members, guests and friends of our members. Several chapter members deserve thanks like, Vivian Loesch, Rebecca Moisant, Teresa Brenner, Paula Valdez and several other volunteers, for decorating, preparing food and making the evening a success! This year we collected donations of pet food from those attending the party and goes to Senior Citizens Inc. That organization, through the Meals on Wheels program, also distributes dog and cat food for seniors who can’t afford to feed their pets and we are sure they will be happy to receive the bags and cans collected. Earlier in December Marj Schneider and Teresa Brenner met with the legislative delegation of Chatham County to talk about the commission for the blind bill being sponsored by the Georgia Vision Alliance. Every year, in December, our county Senators and Representatives come to Savannah to meet with community groups that have concerns which need to be discussed with legislators. This fifteen minute meeting with us was one of the earliest in the morning and not all legislators attended, but we felt they heard us in what we said about the need for a commission for the blind in Georgia. One of the legislators offered to sponsor the bill, so Teresa and I certainly thought that meeting was a success. For the coming year, our plans for the Savannah chapter include holding more social activities and hopefully recruiting new members. The Savannah chapter meetings are held on the third Thursday at the conference room at J. C. Lewis Ford, 9505 Abercorn Street, Savannah, Georgia, from 6:00 pm until 7:30 pm. For more information, please contact Marj Schneider at 912-352-1415, or via email at marjschneider@bellsouth.net.

South Atlanta Chapter:

The South Atlanta chapter meetings are held on the second Thursday, at the Piccadilly Cafeteria, 2000 Crescent Center Blvd. in Tucker, Georgia, from 4:00 until 6:00 pm. For more information, please contact Brent Reynolds, at 404-814-0768, or via email jbr53@samobile.net.

\*\*\*\*\*Georgia Guide Dog Users, GDDU News:

By Betsy Grenevitch

On November 16, 2019, we had a phone meeting and discussed some of these issues: The ADA committee at the Atlanta airport, update from the GDUI Affiliates meetings, the upcoming Air Carrier Access Laws webinar and the election for our two board members. Judy Presley and Marsha Farrow are still board members. After our short business meeting we had a guest speaker with hypoglycemia, speak to us about her service animal which who alerts her when her blood sugar level gets too low. Since we are always looking for new members, we want all of you to know that individuals do not have to be a guide dog user to be a member of our affiliate. We offer associate membership as well as full membership. If you are interested in becoming a member please con tact our treasurer, Alice Ritchhart at

Alice.ritchhart@comcast.net, or call Alice at 912-996-4213. There are two meetings a year, one, in the fall and one scheduled during our GCB conference and convention. For more information about the Georgia guide Dog Users group please contact Betsy Grenevitch at, 678-862-3876, or via email at blindangel61@gmail.com. You can also visit their web site by going to:

 [www.georgiaguidedogusers.org](http://www.georgiaguidedogusers.org).

\*\*\*\*\*GCB In Memory of Melvin Turner

Elisha Melvin Turner was born in Atlanta, at Grady Hospital, on November 27, 1936, and passed away on August 26, 2019 at the age of 82. Growing up in College Park, he spent most of his adult life in Riverdale and Stockbridge, Georgia. Since 2017, he has resided in Sandy Springs, and in his Baptist faith, Melvin enjoyed attending his church and as a Christian, took pride in witnessing to other people. Being an auto mechanic, Melvin worked hard to support his family, and then found employment at Southern Railway. Afterwards, he worked in the maintenance department while employed for many years at Owens, Illinois glass plant until he retired. He worked other jobs such as painting houses, laundry mats and had profitable hobbies in photography and woodworking. Spending time with his family was important, but he also enjoyed camping, fishing, computers and raising tropical fish. With his late wife Barbara, Melvin was very involved with the Georgia Council of the Blind, but also attended several woodturning groups and the Masonic Lodge. Learning new things, sharing his knowledge with others Melvin really enjoyed learning new things, sharing his knowledge with others, socializing with people and making them laugh were some of the things he enjoyed most. Melvin was preceded in death by his wife, of 53 years, Barbara Nobles Turner 12/13/2010, and his brother; Wendall Turner, 8/25/1991. “Paw-Paw” Melvin is survived by his sister; Elsie Turner Breedlove, his 6 children; Wyatt Turner, Linda, Robynn Turner Boland, Mark Griffin, Craigg Turner Brenda, Chris Turner, Trish, Trever Turner, Roxanne, Tara Turner Flodden, Brian, and sixteen grandchildren, thirteen great grandchildren and numerous other extended family members. On Saturday, September 7, 2019 his memorial service was held at Ellenwood Oaks Community Church at 11:00 AM and the service was officiated by Pastor Dan Holley. At the church, family received friends on Saturday from 9:00 AM until 11:00 AM with a repast following the church service. The graveside / inurnment ceremony was held at 2:30 pm at Fairview Memorial Gardens in Stockbridge, Georgia. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the East Georgia chapter of the Georgia Council of the Blind, in care of Linda Cox, 1028 Greenbriar Circle, Decatur GA 30033, and 770-842-2231. To Ellenwood Oaks Community Church, 1234 Panola Road, Ellenwood GA 30294, 678-271-8927.

\*\*\*\*\*My Ireland Trip:

By Judy Presley

Ever since I heard about the company seeseatrips.com at the ACB National Convention in 2001, I have wanted to join one of the trips for the blind directed by Dave Kronk. These trips are planned for the maximum enjoyment of blind and vision impaired individuals. From all parts of the United States, our tour group converged in Dublin, Ireland. Traveling by coach from the South West of Ireland to the North East and back again, we had many exciting and spectacular stops along the way. Having a resident tour guide, who gave us an extraordinary amount of information about Ireland, we had a fun and exciting seven days. As we rode along on our coach, with lots of stops along the way, we had plenty of time to explore the sights. One of my most favorite experiences was when I kissed the Blarney stone at Blarney Castle. Now, forever I have been given the Irish gift of gab to have this amazing experience, we had to climb five stories on an ancient spiral staircase to the roof of an old tower. At that point, I had to lay flat on my back, while they slid me over the edge to give a backward kiss to the Blarney stone. What a very frightening, but, exhilarating sensation. The other favorite experience was my pub night, held in a 250 year old family owned pub, with a thatched roof. The pub only held 45 people and our group had 42 visitors, so we had it all to ourselves. When the very entertaining singer / guitar player, who was also a bit of a comedian, began playing a bluegrass tune I just had to get up and dance a jig. Meeting other blind travelers from all over the United States was something else I really enjoyed and was especially impressed with those who were completely without sight, and yet brave enough to meet the challenging adventure of traveling alone. Others had friends and relatives to assist them and I had Hoyal to help me along. Our cheerful leader, Dave Kronk, kept everyone in stitches as well as making sure everything was smooth sailing. Now, I know why Alice has been on so many of Dave’s tours which was my trip of a lifetime.

\*\*\*\*\*Update from Thomas, Tommy, Woodyard

Dear Georgia Council of the Blind;

Thank you very much for my scholarship this year! It is been very helpful with my last year of undergraduate school which has been an enlightening semester. Several experiences I had, deepened my desire for a career in mediation and law. These situations enabled me to test out the conflict resolution methods I have been reading about and my successful experiences reinforced my interest in conflict resolution, which sparked last spring from my class, Peace Studies.

This semester I had two classes from my Public Policy and Management minor and two classes from my History minor. I have completed all but one of my International Affairs, IA, major classes. In the spring, I will be taking Environmental Politics to finish these IA requirements. This fall, I took Introduction to Nonprofits, in which we had to profile a local nonprofit and I chose to interview Stacie Court with Learning Ally. Last year, Mrs. Court was at our state convention, so she may be known by some of you. Since Learning Ally has an Athens location, I work closely with them. This summer, my mom and I participated in some of their web training about reading conventions. If you are interested, this link will take you to the training. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t46M6TFFnig&feature=youtu.be>

In addition, I took Program Evaluation, which was an all group class. The one organization my group picked to evaluate was the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, which helped me learn more about how the organization works. This semester my third class was Civil War and I found this class really fun and engaging. It was one of my favorite University of Georgia, UGA, classes. Since I had to use documents from the eighth century for my last class, The Middle Ages, it made that class difficult because of the research requirements. Describing how Christianity entered and spread throughout England was my project. Also, I continued my role as an Ambassador for the Office of Emergency Preparedness and became an Ambassador for UGA’s Disability Resource Center Speaker’s Bureau, as well as joining Phi Alpha Delta, an undergraduate law school fraternity and selected for the Franklin Residential College. In addition, I continued in UGA’s prelaw program and joined in my major’s 0 social organizations, the SPIA Student Association. This summer was a blur of studying for the LSAT which I took in July and had numerous accommodation issues which needed to be worked out with the companies LSAC contracted delivery of the LSAT to. Over Christmas break, I will be studying it as I am taking it again in January. The Supreme Court issued a major legal decision in October deciding the Logic section of the LSAT is inaccessible to blind students; however, LSAC has 4 years to fix this, so this will not help me much since I am retaking the LSAT in January.

Time flies since I have been busy visiting law schools like Florida State University College of Law; the Alabama School of Law; the UGA School of Law; Mercer’s School of Law, the University Of Tennessee College Of Law and will soon visit Georgia State College of Law. Last weekend, I sent in my first law school application and will be working to send more over Christmas break. I have decided to focus on international law and alternate dispute resolution. Senioritis is hitting hard, but I am working to stay focused. This spring, the classes I am taking will be: Environmental Politics, Introduction to Museums, Early Modern Women and Policy Analysis. Thank you once again for supporting me this year, both economically and morally. I really appreciate it!

\*\*\*\*\*“A SPOONFUL OF HUMOR HELPS THE MEDICINE GOES DOWN”

By Janet Di Nola Parmerter

For sighted people, the simple task of taking medicine involves nothing more than reading the label, checking the right dosage, filling a glass with water and swallowing the medicine. In contrast, for blind individuals the same task could present a variety of frustrating problems. Where in the world did I put that medicine bottle? What new innovative child-proof way has the pharmaceutical company invented to stop me from opening this bottle? With so many items in the medicine chest, which bottle is this one? Was I supposed to take these once or twice a day? Then when you finally find the right bottle, its, so, now how many of these tiny things do I take right now?

Using our minds and common sense, I’m sure many of us discovered ingenious ways of solving such medication problems; yet, some of those ways tested may not have been as successful as others.

Before I tell you the best solution for taking medication, I’ll share one of my more humorous, yet, unsuccessful stories.

Being a European travel tour guide, I have packing down to a science. Many items which travel to a country with me do not return home. In other words, I pack items which will be thrown away or used up, with the intension of having less in my suitcase. Then, coming home, there is always extra room to pack any of those so called, “treasures I just can’t live without”.

To save space, one thing I did for a while, that is until it almost killed me, was pack a daily number of vitamins and medicine into small disposable packages. As for my medicine, I counted out the pills for each day I would be gone and added a couple extra pills if something should delay the flight home. For the medicine, I put about 25 pills into one package and made two separate packages of pills for each of my two prescriptions. For the vitamins, I methodically laid out rows of seven tiny packages for each of the three weeks and filled 21 packages with the vitamins I took for one day. This meant I didn’t have to carry all those extra bottles to and from my destination. Without twelve vitamin and two prescription bottles, the idea was, I’d have more room in my suitcase. Wasn’t I clever? At least I thought I was, but, as it turned out, I wasn’t so clever after all.

Let me tell you why. This situation happened on the first night of a three week job I had in Italy. After flying across the Atlantic, I gathered the clients and their luggage from different flights and the group met on the Mercedes tour bus. The beautiful drive south brought everyone to a spectacular cliff hanging hotel on the Amalfi coast. Though it was a long drive, everyone was thrilled, but tired and jet-lagged. Still, we arrived just in time for the dinner seating.

In most Italian hotels, dining room waiters do not begin serving a tour group until everyone is present and seated. For that reason, I asked the passengers not to wait for their luggage to be delivered to their room, but just drop off their carry-ons, wash up and then go directly to the dining area to enjoy the breath taking sunset. As for me, I quickly touched up my makeup, filled up a glass with mineral water, and since my vitamins were in my carry-on, I took out one vitamin pack, swallowed a handful of vitamins and rushed to dinner.

Later, while giving a little welcome to Italy orientation, my stomach felt a bit queasy. Usually, because I sleep the entire flight, I don’t have jet-lag, but I wondered if this was an exception to that rule. After all, for me, I was still on New Jersey time, so, it was actually 3:30 in the morning.

By the time I returned to the room, I collapsed on the bed with gripping stomach cramps, began moaning and wondered what was happening. While in the fetal position, my exhausted mind reviewed the day’s activities, what I had eaten, what I had to drink and what I could have done wrong. Could it have been my vitamins? Perhaps, could my mistake have been that I took my vitamins on an empty stomach?

The more I thought about my vitamins, the more I didn’t remember the vitamins feeling like they were different shapes and sizes. Immediately I opened my eyes and mentally relived the experience of swallowing the vitamins. In a second, I jumped off the bed, opened the zip lock bag and counted 22 of the 23 packages left. All but one package felt like they were different sizes and different shapes. Yes, all but one package.

Oh my goodness, I thought, I couldn’t have done that! Starting over, I felt each package one by one and bit by bit. Now I was sure there was only one package in which everything inside felt exactly the same size, it was one of the two medicine packs. Oh NO! That meant before dinner, I had taken all 25 pills in the other entire medicine package instead of my vitamins. That was a three week dosage of medicine all at one time. Tears filled my eyes, I began to sweat and instantly felt worse.

What did I take? Was it the Levothyroxine or the Nexium? If I opened the package, I was sure I could feel the difference. As soon as I opened the medicine pack, yes, I definitely felt the difference and the package of Nexium was missing

Four o’clock in the morning, my groggy husband Keith answered the phone to a hysterical, crying wife. “Keith, Keith,” I screamed, “You have to call poison control and ask them what I should do?” Trying to wake up and get the full story, my confused husband yawned, then calmly asked, “Janet, stop crying and tell me, what you should do about what?” “About what? About what? I poisoned myself!” After I explained the whole story, I begged Keith to call the 24 hour poison control hot-line. Thinking back now that must have been a pretty funny conversation as they probably suspected Keith tried to kill his wife. Keith phoned me back in frustration and said, “I called the number and told the lady I wanted to have information on poisoning.” She asked what information. Then, I asked, “If my wife took a whole bottle of medicine, what should I do?” The lady asked, “Can we speak with your wife?” I said, “No, not now.” She asked me why not, and I told her because she’s not here. She asked me where you were and I said, in Italy. Then, she asked me if I was calling from Italy and I said, “No, New Jersey.” The lady sounded like she was getting mad and asked, “Then how do you know she is poisoned if you are not with her?” I told her because you phoned me, so I needed to know if you would be ok. Finally she asked me what you took, and I couldn’t remember so I just hung up on her.”

At that hour in the morning, my poor sleep deprived husband couldn’t function, so, by the time Keith finished his story, I was laughing so hard, I forgot how awful I felt. Quite frankly I’m surprised the police didn’t show up at his door to interrogate him.

Fortunately, as I hung up, I remembered at dinner hearing one of my 49 passengers say she was a nurse. Immediately, I phoned her room and explained my foolish actions. In a minute she was at my bedside, took my vitals and assured me what I took wouldn’t kill me. That alone brought my blood pressure down about 200 points, but the most amazing part was, for the past ten years, she had been working in the office of a gastroenterologist. Not only did she know everything about what I had taken, but she knew exactly how I was feeling at that time, what I should do at once and how uncomfortable I was going to feel the next day. With her help, advice, olive oil and gallons of mineral water, I got through that, yes, very uncomfortable, difficult and stressful situation. However, from that frightening experience, I learned two very valuable lessons. First, I learned I should never take my medicine out of its original bottle, and second, I learned using “ScripTalk” to read my prescription bottles might, one day, save my life.

In the beginning of this article I planned to tell you the best news ever, so here is the latest announcement. Along with many other pharmacies in Georgia, Publix supermarket finally uses ScripTalk, so any who use a Publix pharmacy, like me, can manage all their prescriptions. No more worries for me, that is, at least with taking the wrong medicine. Here’s the whole scoop about the ScripTalk Station. It is a free, on loan, accessible prescription reading device which allows print impaired individuals to manage their own medications without guesswork, or the need of a sighted person. Special labels incorporate radio-frequency identification, RFID, chips, which store prescription data encoded by a participating pharmacy. A rice sized chip is affixed onto the bottom of their normal prescription bottle, then, after ScripTalk Reader scans the label, it announces the medication name, dosage, refill date and other important information. The pharmacy provides this free service and En-Vision America will loan you their ScripTalk reader, which comes with a Power Adapter, two AA batteries and a practice pill bottle.

Documentation for the ScripTalk Station is available in braille, large print; audio CD and a fully accessible PDF manual can be downloaded from [http://www.envisionamerica.com/files/scriptalk/Station\_Users\_Guide\_1.3.pdf](http://www.envisionamerica.com/files/scriptalk/Station_Users_Guide_1.3.pdf%20) . To find out if your pharmacy participates in ScripTalk, call En-Vision America at 800-890-1180, or go to, <https://www.envisionamerica.com/products/scriptability/participating-pharmacies/>. In addition, ScripTalk Mobile app is available on Android and iOS Iphone 7 and higher. For the iOS download visit <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/scriptalk-mobile/id1317698388> . For Android, go to <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.mistral.scriptalkmobilev2>. So dear friends, my advice to all of you is; stay safe, happy, healthy and alive with ScripTalk!

\*\*\*\*\*Thoughts from Readers

By Mike Hall

I enjoyed Janet's article in the summer issue of the GCB Digest, which was called Ship Shaped or Ship Shocked.  This is the article where she described hugging the wrong man on a cruise...her honeymoon cruise! Being blind does offer up some situations that can be embarrassing and hopefully later quite funny.  When I worked in radio for the old Fox97, I did some short, 10 minute community affairs interviews.  After the interview, I would take the reel of tape to my desk and write up a brief report for the man producing the show.  One particular day, after interviewing two ladies, I took too sharp of a turnout of the newsroom and was heading directly towards the restroom with the reel of tape in my hand.  My plan was to walk the ladies to the front office.  They quickly told me goodbye and left.  No way to recover.  I still don't know what they thought I was going to do with that tape. In addition, I thank Janet for her kind comments on my article in the summer edition called Georgia Blind Lions:  It's all about community, where I talked about using our talents and skills in our local communities.

In this month’s “Member Profile”, I really appreciated how Elizabeth Cantrell rallied her students with the cry, “Our Abilities Outweigh Our Disabilities.” Though Elizabeth said she is inspired by her students, I would venture to say many of her students are inspired by her!

In addition, Judy should get some extra credits for that death defying kiss!

Janet Parmerter

\*\*\*\*\*Recipe: Ham and Cheese Omelet in a bag:

By Ron Worley

Ingredients

Two eggs

Tablespoon of milk

Tablespoon of chopped onions

Tablespoon of green peppers if desired

Tablespoon or so of diced ham

Two tablespoons of your choice cheese

Salt and pepper to taste or any other spices you wish

Directions:

In a small bowl, mix the tablespoon of milk and eggs until blended well.

It may take a couple minutes or so with a fork.

Add the onions, peppers, ham, cheese and spices to the bowl and gently fold in with the egg mixture.

In a quart size zip lock freezer bag, put a pad of butter in first, and then pour in all the rest of the ingredients.

Zip the bag close after removing all the air.

Lay the bag on a plate to put in the microwave.

Cook in the Microwave for 45 seconds per egg.

This may differ depending on the power of your microwave.

Remove from the microwave and let stand for a minute or two because it will be quite hot.

Open the zip lock and be careful of the steam.

Tip the bag on to the supported plate and the omelet should smoothly slide out.

Add a couple freezer biscuits with homemade apple butter, and enjoy.

\*\*\*\*\*VoiceOver friendly iPhone Apps

By Ron Worley

Have you heard of Clue?

This is an app that can trace your steps and guide you back to where you started.  This is a very easy app and is very good to help you find your seat again in the waiting room, the front door of a large building or even from point A to point B and remember it for future use.  Check it out in the Apple App Store.

\*\*\*\*\*Apply for a GCB Scholarship:

By Marj Schneider

Each year the Georgia Council of the Blind awards several scholarships of up to $1000, through the Al and Cora Camp Memorial Scholarship Fund, to support blind and visually impaired students in their academic pursuits. Scholarships will once again be awarded by GCB in the spring of 2020. Please share this information with high school and college students who are blind or visually impaired throughout the State of Georgia and encourage them to visit the GCB website for the scholarship application and guidelines. Applications are due by March 1, 2020. GCB also offers its members the opportunity to apply for a leadership or first timer’s scholarship. The leadership scholarship provides financial support to GCB members who want to attend seminars or other training opportunities to develop their leadership skills. The first timer’s scholarship provides financial support to one member who has not attended the annual GCB conference and convention to participate for the first time. Updated guidelines and procedures, to apply for both the leadership and first timer’s scholarship, are available on the GCB website. Applications for leadership scholarships can be submitted at any time. The deadline to apply for the 2020 first timer’s scholarship is March 1, 2020.

Apply for an ACB Scholarship

The American Council of the Blind, ACB, annually awards approximately 21 scholarships ranging in amounts from $1,000 to $7,500. These scholarships are awarded to students attending vocational/technical colleges, entering freshmen, undergraduate and graduate students who are legally blind, maintain a 3.0 GPA and are involved in their school or local community. To qualify, each applicant must be enrolled in an accredited college or university in the United States for the upcoming fall semester. To read the scholarship guidelines and complete an on-line application, please visit [https://acb.org/scholarships](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=00198I0Mceg4Jm-__1yDMNf7_E1vph0ikyO-qOoOpdNeYIdmTAH2KUPIKvM-xlw0vtoXRJt_JUr_W-8k5YHxOdyiF0B-WahsAZCcVyCC7ZIpOBXPTDE5dQt8axoPXp2RLk8cn6VVTCX4IGsmOLzrlzg2w==&c=_B_-l9LlBr-KXT9nTc9oP5j2Iid5448tJ6X9zYcWFDhJLhrju7xsLQ==&ch=19OW8ltZS6T3TthwDmd2p_xgBZFQFq6fADx31RnZTRJ3dZzKf3Rvkw==). Applications are being accepted online through Friday, February 14, 2020 at 11:59 pm. Only application supplements which cannot be emailed, can be mailed in, and must be postmarked no later than Friday, February 14, 2020. If you have any questions about the American Council of the Blind or the ACB scholarship program, contact our Minnesota office at 612-332-3242 or one of our Scholarship Committee Chairpersons, Denise Colley at colleyd1952@gmail.com , or Rebecca Bridges at bridgesrj@gmail.com. Scholarship winners will be announced in May each winner will be expected to attend the ACB National Conference and Convention, which will be July 3 through July 10, 2020 in Schaumburg, Illinois.