

September 4, 2023

Memo To: Executive Officers, Board Members, Chapter & Division Presidents & Others

From: Marty R. McKenzie, President

Positive Note 1934

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Dear Federation Family,

The state convention is now behind us and today is Labor Day which is considered to be the unofficial end of summer. Last week, South Carolina was brushed by tropical storm Idalia, but we were blessed to sustain minimal damage. We now turn our attention to the last four months of the calendar year which will prove to be busy months in the NFB of SC.

Congratulations to Janice L. Bright on her acceptance into the Kenneth Jernigan Leadership in Service pilot program. This is a wonderful opportunity for participants to grow in their knowledge of the Federation and in their leadership abilities. I look forward to working with Janice over the next year as she moves through this in-depth NFB training opportunity.

Please note that Presidential Release 530 will take place from Chicago, Illinois on September 7, 2023 at 8:00 p.m. Watch the listserv for ways that you can join President Riccobono for this monthly informational session.

The Route 66 Ride for Literacy will conclude on September 8, 2023 in Chicago Illinois. Dan O'Rourke has been on the road since late July and this has been an exciting time for the Federation. You can expect additional information during the Presidential Release and then there will be a grand celebration in Chicago when he arrives on Friday, September 8, 2023.

The Membership & Mentoring committee of the NFB of SC will hold a new member event on Saturday, September 16, 2023 from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. The event will either be in person, virtual, or both. The format will be determined by the will of the members attending. If it is in person, the event will be held at the Federation Center of the Blind, and any virtual component will be held via Zoom.

Please send Thom Spittle an email at nfbsc.lab.4@gmail.com and indicate whether you prefer in-person, hybrid or virtual. Please include your name, phone number and e-mail address if you have one. You can also call Thom at 803-331-3344. If Thom does not answer, please leave a voicemail with your information.

The purpose of this event is for any member to learn more about the NFB of SC affiliate, a little history, how it is structured, and to have your questions answered. No matter how long you have been a member, this event is for you if you would like to learn more about the inner workings of our organization. Please spread the word to others that can benefit.

October is celebrated as Blind Equality Achievement Month and it is a time when we publicly highlight the National Federation of the Blind in our communities. As chapters and divisions plan events, please share with everyone via the NFB of SC listserv. Events should also be registered at www.nfb.org/blindmonth.

The We Care committee is holding a Birthday Blessings Fundraiser from September 1 through December 31, 2023. To determine the amount of your donation, count the letters in your birth month and multiply by two. This gives you your donation amount. The purpose is to assist members in our communities who may have needs during this time. For more information, contact Melinda Jones at Melindajones0571@gmail.com or Pathronda Anderson at tronda1@outlook.com.

Here is David Houck's Federation Facing Fact.

The Blind Who Lead the Blind will provide background information on each board member over the next fifteen Positive Notes. We begin with Marty McKenzie, President of the NFB of SC this week.

Marty R. McKenzie holds a bachelor of arts in English with secondary teacher certification from Francis Marion College class of 1992, a Master's Degree in Education in special education with an emphasis in visual impairment from the University of South Carolina Columbia campus class of 1994 and an Education Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership from Nova Southeastern University class of 2010. He holds every administrative certification except that of Superintendent.

Mr. McKenzie serves as the Principal of Statewide Blind and Visually Impaired Education for the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind, as well as the Statewide Vision Consultant for the South Carolina Department of Education and the Office of Special Education Services. He has provided training including graduate level work for teachers of the visually impaired for almost 30 years and continues to serve both teachers and students in various capacities.

Mr. McKenzie is well-known for his expertise in both the fields of blindness and visual impairment and access technology. In addition to his other commitments, he serves as the President of the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina (NFB of SC), President of the Clarendon County Chapter of the NFB of SC, and as a member of the Computer Science and Technology Division of the NFB of SC.

Mr. McKenzie served as the District Six representative on the Board of Directors of the NFB of SC from 2000 to 2016 and again from 2020 to 2022. He was elected to serve as the President of this organization at the 2022 convention.

As an Ex Officio Trustee for the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) since 2005, Mr. McKenzie served on both the APH Educational Products Advisory Committee and the APH Educational Services Advisory Committee and went on to chair both committees in his last year on each. In the role of Ex Officio Trustee, Mr. McKenzie administers the APH Federal Quota Program for the SC School for the Deaf and the Blind and the SC Department of Education as established under the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind of 1879.

Mr. McKenzie served as the Chairman of the SC Vision Education Partnership of which the NFB of SC is a founding member from 2010 to 2011 and then from 2015 until present with Dr. Tina Herzberg serving as co-chair. Additionally, he served on the SC State Library Board of Directors from 2012 through 2022 as appointed by then Governor Nikki Hayley. Mr. McKenzie began serving on the SC State Library Talking Book Services Advisory Council in 2005 and continues in this role today.

Mr. McKenzie has held many leadership positions over the years in the field of blindness education and is recognized nationally as a leader in the field.

Mr. McKenzie is the third of four boys born to the late Jackson Arnette and Mattie Nell McKenzie and was educated in Williamsburg County. At age 17, he became the church organist and has led his congregation in worship for 38 years. He is a founding member of Cornerstone Ministries and has served as a deacon since February, 2003. He has

consistently provided church bulletins for the past 40 years and enjoys his church family immensely.

In his spare time, Mr. McKenzie enjoys time with close friends and family, playing for his congregation as well as participating in hymn sings, reading and good food.

Marty

Marty R. McKenzie, President

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