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

From: Marty R. McKenzie, President

Positive Note 1905

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Dear Federation Family,

We begin this Positive Note with the sad news of LeVern Wilson's passing. Here is what the Honorable Parnell Diggs wrote upon learning of this sad event.

"LeVern was a dedicated member of the Federation. He became blind around the age of 60 (after a long life as a sighted person), and when blindness came, LeVern was not expecting it. He considered taking his own life, sitting on his bed with his gun for several hours one afternoon. But fortunately for us, he decided to live. LeVern often spent hours on the phone talking with and counseling people who were newly blind.

As to his delicious barbecue, I once asked him to prepare it for a legislative reception. It made quite an impression when the senators and house members in Columbia realized that the BBQ they were enjoying was made by a blind man."

Our thoughts and prayers go out to LeVern's wife, Jeri, daughter, Valerie and his wide network of family and friends. Information regarding arrangements will be shared on the NFB of SC listserv.

The Federation Center rang with excitement as the Sweetheart's Ball took place Saturday evening. There was excellent food provided by Federationist Janice Smith and her team and D.J. Butch did an outstanding job with the evening's music. There was a general air of happiness and merriment as tables participated in Name that Tune, which proved challenging for some attendees. A great and fun-filled time was had by all! The NFB of SC extends a huge "thank you" to Debra Canty and Andrew Adams, co-chairs of the Fundraising committee, for all their hard work on this event. The state organization also appreciates all who assisted Debra and Andrew in any way! It was truly a large-scale team project.

Rocky Bottom ticket sales are underway, and the drawing will take place at the Leadership Seminar in March. The buyer of the winning ticket will receive \$500, the seller will receive \$50 and the chapter or division that sells the most tickets will receive \$300 for the treasury. It is very important that we sell these tickets to help support Rocky Bottom. Contact David Houck at nfbsc@sc.rr.com or via phone at 803-254-3777 if you need tickets.

Lions Vision Services is accepting applications for the Santee blind fishing event, which will take place on April 21-22, 2023. Up to 50 participants can be accommodated. Please visit their web site at <https://lionsvisionservices.org/blindfishing/> for more information and to access the application. You can also call them at 803-796-1305. David Houck also has the application in the state office.

Here is David Houck's Federation fun fact for this week! Let's continue to read and learn together about our rich history in South Carolina.

Advisory Boards: Since the inception of the Federation Center of the Blind, a Board of Trustees was established to conduct the operations, programs and policies of the Center. At the same time, an

Advisory Board was established consisting of local leaders in the community, business and government designated to lend their advice and expertise and assist in building and fundraising projects.

Early Advisory Board members like Senator Hyman Rubin, David Baker of Baker & Baker, Joe Edens, Sr. of Edens Enterprises, and Allen Mustard of SCE&G were essential in the capital campaigns on Center expansion projects. Hyman Rubin was responsible for the property the Center is located on, so that the original Center could be constructed in 1961.

Joe Edens had a special place in his heart for the Center and would do whatever he could to be of assistance. The same was true of David Baker and his son John Baker. Bernard H. Kline of Kline Iron and Steel granted the Center a substantial amount for an annual \$500 scholarship which is still distributed to this day. Senator Joel Lourie was essential in assisting the Center during the 33 years it was with United Way of the Midlands. John Harris equipped the Center's computer lab in 1990 and furnished the carpeting and furniture in the lounge.

The Federation Center's Advisory Board never dictated policy or direction of the Center because it was the purview of the all blind Board of Trustees. However, the input of the Advisory Board helped to make our dreams become reality. We tip our hat to their service and dedication to the blind. This board was disbanded recently due to a decision made by the Board of Trustees.