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

From: Marty R. McKenzie, President

Positive Note 1909

843-939-8091 marty2music@outlook.com

Dear Federation Family,

On Thursday, March 9, 2023, First Vice President Lenora Robertson traveled to Jefferson to meet with the Chesterfield Chapter of the NFB of SC. Lenora was received warmly and provided an excellent meal. She offered the chapter members first-hand information about what is happening in the NFB of SC. This included fundraisers, the Statewide Seminar, the upcoming Statewide Leadership Seminar and many other items of interest. The Chesterfield Chapter is excited about what comes next and plans to attend upcoming meetings. A hearty thank you to Lenora for making this trip!

The Statewide Leadership Seminar will take place Saturday, March 25, 2023 at the Federation Center of the Blind. Currently, it is open to Chapter and Division presidents and state board members. Please contact David Houck by Monday morning, March 20, 2023 if you plan to attend. You can reach him at 803-254-3777 or via e-mail at nfbsc@sc.rr.com. Please make sure you receive an acknowledgement as their have been recent challenges with e-mail.

There are only two weeks left in the Rocky Bottom ticket fundraiser. Currently there are 358 tickets sold totaling \$1,790. Please make a hard push during the last two weeks to make this fundraiser a huge success! We all love Rocky Bottom and it requires significant funding to keep it in good order. Reach out to David Houck at 803-254-3777 if you need additional tickets. Thank you all for making this important program a priority!

From David Houck

On Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at the Assistive Technology Expo, WLTX Channel 19 interviewed me about our training services and Successful Transitions. Today, we just completed another interview with WLTX which included Shannon Cook, Isaiah Nelson and myself being interviewed about the Columbia Chapter and Federation services. We talked about the April 27 BBQ and gave a tour of our facilities including using JAWS and braille production. Everyone did a great job. There were good reviews from WLTX viewers.

Important Things to Remember:

- Annual Vision Summit on March 17, 2023
- Statewide Leadership Seminar on March 25, 2023
- Rocky Bottom ticket sales (Drawing on March 25, 2023)
- SCPOBC on April 13, 2023

- Lions Vision Services Fishing trip on April 21-22, 2023
- Houston ticket sales drawing on May 30, 2023

If you need additional information about any of the items above, please contact David Houck at the Federation Center at 803-254-3777. You can also contact me as shown above.

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.

Success in rehabilitation for the blind and more lessons learned: Before 1965, the Department of Public Welfare housed services for the blind which were dismal at best. As Marshall Tucker and Dr. Capps would say, "There is nothing well or fair at the Department of Public Welfare." It took three years of hard work to establish a separate state agency for the blind.

7. 1965 - Legislation providing for 9 member legislative study committee to study the feasibility of establishing the Commission for the Blind.
8. 1966 - Act #2127 establishing the SC Commission for the Blind.

The old workshop for the blind known as the SC Association of the Blind in Columbia was closed and the property was given to establish the Commission's Training and Adjustment Center.

10. 1970 - Act #1286 authorizes the Association of the Blind of South Carolina to transfer certain real estate to the SC Commission for the Blind.
12. 1971 - Bill #S580 gives authorization to the SC Commission for the Blind to construct an Adult Training and Adjustment Center.

The Board of Commissioners of the Commission for the Blind was enlarged and representation by the blind was also made.

17. 1975 - Bill S106 enlarges the Board of Commissioners of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind from 5 to 7 members.

After all this progress, certain legislators wanted to restructure or abolish the Commission. Some even wanted to make it a part of the Department of Mental Health, what a contradiction! Others wanted the Commission to be a part of other agencies like Vocational Rehabilitation which would water down services specific to blindness.

26. 1993 - Successfully fought restructuring the Commission for the Blind on a vote of 95 to 11.

Even in budget cutting years, the Commission for the Blind survived better because the blind showed up in the galleries of the General Assembly daily to support the Commission.

34. 2001 - The NFB of SC fought to reduce a 17% budget cut to a 9% cut, saving the Commission for the Blind \$300,000
36. 2002 - Proviso 14, Amendment 86 - Reversing the abolishment of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind
38. 2003 Commission for the Blind excluded from restructuring efforts H.3370
40. 2004 Commission for the Blind and School for the Deaf and the Blind removed from Restructuring efforts. S.841.