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

From: Marty R. McKenzie, President

Positive Note 1978

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Dear Federation Family,

We have just returned from the 84th annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind which took place in Orlando, Florida July 3-8, 2024 and Federationist are energized! The Rosen Center embraced the Federation warmly and attendees were treated with dignity and respect. I had to leave on July 8, 2024, so there may be updated numbers. During the last general session, there were 2,589 attendees registered for the convention and South Carolina had 89 people registered. It was an exciting convention! There was friendly competition between affiliates regarding the amount being given to PAC. South Carolina ranks high on this list but the exact placement is not available at this time.

Congratulations to Sonia Timmons who was elected to the Board of Directors of the National Organization of Parents of Blind Children! Sonia had her three daughters and her parents with her at convention. This was her first time and we will feature her thoughts about convention in a later Positive Note.

There were the usual division and seminar meetings which were very informative for those who attended them. There was a huge focus on artificial intelligence (AI) by several vendors and I attended many of these sessions. The tools that are becoming available to assist blind people to live the lives we want continue to evolve and we are glad to participate in trainings and testing of such tools.

Day one of the convention general sessions began with the expected opening ceremonies and development of the nominating committee. There were some changes to the National Board of Directors this year as shown below. Congratulations to our elected and re-elected board members:

- President Mark Riccobono of Maryland
- First Vice President Pam Allen of Louisiana
- Second Vice President Everette Bacon of Utah
- Secretary Barbara Manuel of Alabama

- Treasurer Norma Crosby of Texas
- Shawn Callaway of District of Columbia
- Jamie Richey of Nebraska
- Jim Marks of Montana
- Donald Porterfield of Arizona
- Ben Dallin of Wisconsin
- Sheila Wright of Missouri

At the National Board Meeting, President Riccobono announced the dates and locations for the next five conventions. We will travel to New Orleans, Louisiana July 8-13, 2025 for the 2025 convention. We will travel to Austin, Texas for the 2026 and 2027 conventions and then to Chicago, Illinois for the 2028 and 2029 conventions.

Lenora Robertson will once again serve as the Door Prize Chair for the NFB of SC State Convention. Cash and gift cards are always favorite items. You can purchase gift cards from the At Large chapter in the amount of \$25 or greater. Please bring your door prize contributions to the convention or you can mail them to Lenora Robertson, 1258 Roundtree Circle, Rock Hill, SC 29732. Let's have an abundance of door prizes to share at the state convention.

The Embassy Suites is now accepting reservations for the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina State Convention being held on August 15-18, 2024. Rooms can be booked at \$112 plus tax and any applicable fees for singles, doubles, triples and quads. You may call the Embassy Suites at 803-252-8700. Reference the NFB of SC State Convention to obtain the special rate. Members are not being charged the first night's room; instead, a hold is placed on your card until check-in. The cut-off for room reservations is July 25, 2024.

Registration for the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina State Convention is now live! The cost is \$85 for adults, \$55 for students and \$25 for children under eighteen. These prices all adjust upward after July 25, 2024. Please visit <https://nfbofsc.org/node/178> to register online. If you need assistance to register online, , please contact me and someone will assist you.

From Lori Anne Coley, President, Sports and Recreation Division

Our Sports and Rec fundraiser is extended to August, coinciding with the state convention. All purchased tickets remain valid. Purchase \$20 tickets for a chance to win big, including a \$750 and a \$250 giveaway. Contributions support our Sports Camp Week for the Blind at Rocky Bottom Retreat and Conference Center of the Blind in Upstate South Carolina. Led by the NFBSC Sports and Rec Division, our mission is inclusive sports. Purchase tickets via PayPal at

<https://www.paypal.me/sportreconfbnc> or Zelle at srnfbsc21@yahoo.com. Goal: sell 100+ tickets by August 17, 2024, with the drawing at the state convention. Spread the word! For more information, contact Lori Anne Coley at 803-316-9838.

From the SC Association of Black Leaders

The SC Association of Black Leaders is thrilled to announce that we are extending our coffee basket fundraiser to the State Convention in August! The basket includes 1 tin of hot chocolate, three flavors of Starbucks coffee, two NFB tumblers, and a \$25 gift card. Tickets are 1 for \$5 or 3 for \$10, every \$20 spent earns you an entry to win a Keurig! Purchase tickets at the NFB of SC PayPal or by sending a check or money order to the Federation Center at 119 S. Kilbourne Rd., Columbia, SC 29205, noting "coffee basket" in the memo field.

Things to Remember

- NFB of SC State Convention Registration and Room Reservations are due by July 25, 2024.

Marty

Marty R. McKenzie, President

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