

Spring 2018



OHIO CONNECTION

American Council of the Blind of Ohio

FROM THE ACBO OFFICE

By Vicky Prahin

Have you ever wondered why ACB-Ohio has an office—or an executive director? Here is a behind-the-scenes peek at some of what our staff does and why we do it.

ACBO is not as large as some affiliates, such as the Florida Council of the Blind or the California Council of the Blind, but we do have a large enough membership to make administration a challenge. Among other things, we have records to maintain, funds to administer, state requirements to maintain our 501(c)(3) status, and the *Ohio Connection* to put together each quarter. We work to continue our affiliation with the Better Business Bureau, be a presence on local and state committees and task groups, and manage our information and referral services. Without the executive director, the officers would have to do all of this.

Until 2014 all these activities took place at the home of the executive director.

When Katie Frederick assumed the position, that became impossible because she lived in an apartment with little extra space for files, phone, and office equipment. So we found an office and moved in. The office is in Clintonville in Columbus, near the Park of Roses, on a main bus route, and is accessible. Having the office gives us other perks, such as providing a professional space for conducting business and meeting space in the building for small groups.

I have two part-time staff to help get everything done and keep it up to date. Each of them is featured later in this issue.

Madeleine Knill started in 2017 as our bookkeeper. Madeleine is a retired CPA who keeps books for a limited number of nonprofits and charges minimal fees for her time and expertise. She keeps our accounts up to date, reviewing all bank statements and receipts, and creates the spreadsheets we need for vari-

ous agencies and organizations, such as the Secretary of State and Community Shares of Mid-Ohio.

My very able assistant is Michelle Spillan. Michelle has terrific computer skills, writing abilities, and “a good eye.” Each quarter she collects items for the newsletter, adds photos and captions, organizes everything into an appealing format, and then addresses and mails the large print copies and prepares envelopes for the audio version.

One of my more time-consuming duties involves the telephone. We sometimes receive as many as ten or more calls in a day. Members call for information about our activities or to complain about missing e-mails or newsletters; social workers and medical personnel call for referrals to organizations providing all kinds of services; people moving to Ohio want information about ACBO chapters and programs. For many years we have had an 800 number, but we will soon discontinue that since most people now have unlimited long distance and because the majority of calls to that number are from telemarketers or wrong numbers. Our number is 614-261-3561.

Throughout the year ACBO is asked to have a table and distribute information

at a variety of events, such as vision fairs and training sessions. Now and then the executive director gives a presentation about who we are and what we do. If you have questions or need a speaker for an event, call 614-261-3561.

OUR BOOKKEEPER MADELEINE KNILL



I am Madeleine Knill, the new bookkeeper for ACBO. After retiring from the Accounts Payable department at the American Red Cross, I have taken some part-time bookkeeping positions, your organization being one. Currently I also work with Community Shares of Mid-Ohio, one of our funders, and the Center for Wholeness, a similarly sized nonprofit agency.

During my full-time working years, I was a public school teacher for five years, the fiscal coordinator of Huckle-

berry House for 15 years, a software developer and trainer for ten years, and spent ten years at the American Red Cross. I use my skills and experience to pay bills, record your organization's payroll, deposit all income, and prepare monthly and other financial statements.

I usually work every other Monday. Please be sure to introduce yourself and say hello the next time our paths cross.

OUR ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT MICHELLE SPILLAN

I've been working part time for ACBO since 2011. Each time I come in to the office, I never know what challenges await. I manage the membership records in QuickBooks, help prepare for conferences and workshops, help with paperwork and online sites that aren't accessible, provide transportation, and assist the executive director in other ways as needed.

Four times a year, my focus turns to this newsletter. I collect the submissions, edit them, and design the print edition. As editor of the *Ohio Connection*, I welcome your input and suggestions for improving the newsletter or any story ideas you might have. Send your items to

SAVE THE DATE!

This year ACB-Ohio will collaborate with ACB of Indiana for our state convention. It will be hosted by ACBI in Indianapolis from November second through the fourth at the Waterfront Hotel. Look for more details in the summer issue of the *Ohio Connection*.



acbo.newsletter@gmail.com or call me at 614-261-3561.

Before coming to ACBO I worked for my alma mater, The Ohio State University. I was communications coordinator in the Department of Food Science and

Technology for several years, then I worked as an administrative assistant at the Moritz College of Law at OSU. Prior to that I worked in publishing at *Columbus CEO Magazine* and Ohio State University Press.

In my free time I enjoy cooking, reading, and searching for treasures (some might say clutter) at flea markets, estate sales and the like. I'm an animal lover and share my home with two cats and a dog. One of my favorite things about this job is I get to play with the guide dogs around the office when they're out of harness.



IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Since some of the numbers you may need have recently changed, here is a short list of ACB-related phone numbers:

ACB-Ohio office: 614-261-3561

ACB Radio: 712-775-4808

ACB Braille Forum: 605-475-8154

ACB national office: 202-467-5081

GET TO KNOW NEW BOARD MEMBER ANNIE DAVIS

By Katie Frederick

Joining ACB in 2004 has provided me a wealth of experiences, opportunities, and long-lasting friendships greater than I could have imagined. When I meet or hear about someone who has recently joined the organization or is elected to its board of directors, I want to know more. How did the person hear about ACB? What drew him or her to consider joining or becoming more active in the organization? What hobbies and interests are important to the indi-



vidual outside of ACB? These were a few questions I asked Annie Davis, who

was elected to the ACB-Ohio Board of Directors at the 2017 conference and convention. Sit back and join me on Annie's ACB journey.

Annie recalls first hearing about ACB from a high school friend who introduced her to the Marlaina Show on ACB Radio. From time to time, Annie would tune into the program but was not sure she wanted to become involved. In 2005 Annie was the first recipient of the ACB-Ohio Greater Cincinnati Chapter (ACBOGCC) scholarship and met chapter members who would later play a large role in her life. Attending her first state conference and convention in 2006 increased Annie's knowledge of the organization, but she was not sure membership was the path she wanted to take. After graduating from Northern Kentucky University and settling into life after college, becoming more involved with ACBOGCC appealed to Annie. She attended more meetings, formed relationships with chapter members, and gained a better understanding of ACB and the organization's philosophy.

“Jacque Perry was a mentor to me when I attended ACBOGCC meetings,” Annie said. “She helped me understand ACB and encouraged me to become more involved with the local chapter.” In 2011 Annie did just that by

participating on the Scholarships and Awards Committee. “I wanted to give back and help students,” said Annie. “Serving on the committee gave me a way to give back to ACBOGCC and become more involved with the chapter.” When the chapter was looking for a new meeting location, Annie took the opportunity to serve on that committee as well.

In 2017 Annie decided to attend the ACB-Indiana/Ohio conference. “I wanted to learn as much as I could about advocacy, technology—all of that,” she said. During elections Annie's name was placed in nomination, and she is now serving her first year on the Ohio board. “I hope serving on the board allows me to form friendships, increase my advocacy skills, and bring new energy and ideas to the organization.” Annie's attendance at the 2018 ACB Legislative Seminar in February in Washington gave her the opportunity to practice her advocacy skills and “hit the ground running.”

When not working or participating in ACB-related activities, Annie enjoys spending time with her husband Jamie, singing, reading, and writing. Welcome to the ACBO Board of Directors, Annie. We will benefit from your ideas and energy, and we hope this is just the beginning of your ACB story.

SEE THE WORLD THROUGH TRAVELEYES

By Dan Raymond

Traveleyes is a unique travel company offering worldwide group travel for blind and fully sighted travelers. On each trip, half the group are blind and half are sighted. Every day, we pair a different sighted traveler with a different blind traveler, and then it's off to explore! We offer guaranteed one-to-one guiding and live audio description for the duration of your vacation, as well as the services of our specially trained Traveleyes tour managers and the ben-

efits of our 14 years of experience taking thousands of blind and visually impaired travelers on adventures all over the world. In return for guiding and describing, Traveleyes personally subsidizes the cost of the sighted guide's trip, meaning that accessible travel comes at no extra cost for visually impaired and blind travelers. Come, experience the world with Traveleyes and start exploring with all of your senses!

Phone: 646-867-3937

Website: <https://traveleyes-international.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TraveleyesLtd>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/TraveleyesLtd>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/traveleyesltd/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/traveleyesltd>



Traveleyes user Liz Frankland feels the horns of a sable antelope skull in Chobe Park in Botswana

MY ADVENTURES WITH TRAVELEYES

By Liz Frankland

It was long ago and beneath the clearest blue Southern French summer sky that my desire to travel the world was born. I was studying French for my degree back in the U.K. and, for my sins, I had been sent to Avignon to practice the language on its own turf for an entire academic year. For someone like myself, who had barely left the North of England in all her 21 years, this sun-baked Mediterranean land was paradise. I fell in love with the sunshine, the cicadas, and, of course, the local brew, 'pastis.'

In terms of my travelling "career" it was merely the beginning. I had never experienced anything so exotic as the South of France, but, it was so delicious that it left me craving more. I was very lucky that a few opportunities to travel abroad came my way during the next few years, even taking me as far as New Zealand. However, at the end of each vacation, there was often no plan nor any realistic possibility of travelling somewhere else again. I became immensely frustrated that I was unable simply to book a trip for myself, using any vacation company to any destination of my choice. There was no choice

because I needed someone to guide me and it was rare that friends or family were available to fulfill this role.

Just when I thought I would go insane, Traveleyes burst onto the runway of my life. I had seen a number of advertisements for this company in various magazines to which I subscribed, but I hesitated to act on my instinct. I was a little concerned that there might be a



Liz and partner Paul with an elephant skull at Victoria Falls on the Zambia/Zimbabwe border



mealtimes, savoring tapas and the local wine. I made friends with people who I had never met before, and the bonds were such that a friend I met on that very vacation is coming to stay with me in a few weeks' time.

I have since been to many destinations with Traveleyes and thoroughly enjoyed them all. I've been drenched under Niagara Falls, basked in the tranquility of Lake Titicaca, and stroked lions in Zimbabwe. In all cases, I have found the organization of people, hotels, luggage, food, transport, and excursions to be absolutely top notch. Traveleyes' specialty is that there are always at least the same number of sighted travelers as there are visually impaired. This means that all the visually impaired people always have the luxury of their own guide and no sharing of guides is necessary. Each day, everyone swaps round so that everyone is paired up with someone different, allowing everyone to get to know everyone else.

Liz feeling the famous Little Princess statue in Budapest, Hungary

prevailing attitude of "let's take the poor blind people out because we feel sorry for them." Eventually, I took the bull by the horns and I booked to go to Andalusia in September, 2006.

This vacation quickly disabused me of my fears. The point was gently but firmly made that the sighted and the visually impaired travelers were all on an equal footing and the emphasis was very much on being sociable. There were people of all ages and backgrounds and everyone was out to have a cracking good time.

We explored the "pueblos blancos" snuggled in the mountain hollows, and together we passed leisurely

Traveleyes is extraordinary in its uniqueness. There is no other company

like it in the entire world, and people from America, Australia, Europe, and all over the world often join these vacations, to travel to every continent and undertake every activity.

It's time to take the bull by the horns, as I did, and book something with this fantastic company. Come and join the Traveleyes family and tell your friends about it too!



Liz and Paul at Kopan monastery at Kathmandu, Nepal

ACB-OHIO AWARDS

Each year ACB-Ohio hopes to give seven awards at our state convention. We can't give them if you don't nominate deserving individuals. Do you know someone who fits any of the following descriptions? Send your recommendations by September 15. It's not too early to send those nominations!

The **KEN MORLOCK AWARD** goes to a person who is blind or visually impaired who has worked to improve the lives of blind or visually impaired citizens of Ohio. Ken Morlock served in various capacities for our state affiliate for more than 15 years, serving as a role model for others. Past recipients include our current president, Jill Noble, and Jan Blatz, a long-time member from Grove City.

The **RUTH DAVIDSON AWARD** honors a woman who worked hard to enhance the lives of those who are blind or visually impaired. Recipients of this award include Sue Wesley and Marc Solomon.

We present the **ARLENE COHEN ART OF TEACHING AWARD** to a blind or visually impaired teacher or to a sighted teacher who has taught blind or vis-

ually impaired students. This award commemorates a past president of the affiliate who taught for many years and considered ACBO very important.

Sandy Foersterling, Cincinnati, and James Duffield, Pickerington, have received this award. Tell us about your special teachers!

The **AMBASSADOR AWARD** goes to an ACB-Ohio member who has worked tirelessly for ACB-Ohio and the blind community. Terry Olandese and Nolan Crabb are recent recipients.

The **MEDIA AWARD** is given to a person who has written or reported about blindness or issues that concern blind or visually impaired persons. All nominations for the Media Award must be accompanied by the article, video, or other presentation. We have presented this award to Deborah Kendrick and Irwin Hott, among others.

The **EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD** is given to an Ohio employer who has hired and made accommodations for employees who are blind or visually impaired. We honored the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center with this award in 2011 and in 2017 and Concept Services of Medina was our most recent winner.

The **COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD** is presented to a city, town, or organization for outstanding efforts put forth to enhance the lives of blind or visually impaired people. Past recipients include the Medina Lions Club and the city of Columbus.

Send your nominations to Lori Woodall at loriandkenny74@gmail.com or call 513-876-3351.

ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Every year the American Council of the Blind of Ohio offers six scholarships to residents of Ohio. Apply for \$1,000 if you will be a freshman in the 2018-2019 school year and are blind or visually impaired; \$2,000 scholarships if you are a blind or visually impaired undergraduate; \$2,500 scholarships if you are a blind or visually impaired graduate student; or a \$2,000 scholarship if you are blind or visually impaired or studying a blindness-related field.

To apply for these scholarships and to get qualification information, go to www.acbohio.org or call the ACBO office at 614-261-3561.

OHIO'S CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

By Barbara Corner

Do you have questions about what kind of services you can receive from the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities' Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired? Ohio's Client Assistance Program can help!

Ohio's Client Assistance Program (CAP) is a federally mandated program that advocates for and protects the rights of individuals with disabilities who are applying for or receiving vocational rehabilitation services or Independent Living Services for the Older Blind from the Ohio Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI), and/or the Independent Living Centers throughout Ohio.

Disability Rights Ohio runs the CAP in Ohio. CAP provides individual legal representation and advocacy, information and referral services, outreach, and education. CAP also provides information on employment rights under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

CAP can help individuals who:

- Have questions about whether BSVI can pay for school and/or assistive technology;

- Need information about rehabilitation services;
- Have been turned down for rehabilitation services;
- Have concerns about services provided by and decisions made by a rehabilitation counselor;
- Are not satisfied with their rehabilitation services;
- Do not agree with a decision to close their case;
- Have questions about what services they may receive from the Independent Living Services for the Older Blind;
- Are having difficulty with, or need information about Centers for Independent Living; or
- Have other problems with BSVI services.

CAP can also give you information about employment discrimination and your rights under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

For help with CAP issues, either contact the Intake Department at Disability

Rights Ohio at 1-800-282-9181 or 614-466-7264. Intake hours are 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. weekdays, but callers can leave a message 24 hours a day or complete our online intake form anytime at <http://www.disabilityrightsohio.org/intake-form>.

Find additional resources about vocational rehabilitation services, employment, and other issues on the Employment page of our Self-Advocacy Resource Center at <http://www.disabilityrightsohio.org/employment>

BSVI EXPANDS SERVICES TO OLDER BLIND

By Elizabeth Sammons

The Independent Living Older Blind (ILOB) program had a great year, closing the federal fiscal year last September with 1,589 Ohioans with vision loss age 55 and older reaching their goals. This is a 26 percent increase from the past year. Our ILOB team provided these seniors with tips, technology, and skills to feel safer and more self-sufficient. The unit totaled 29 outreach activities statewide this year, reaching an estimated 1,179 potential participants.

Assistance varies in this program from special lighting or magnification technology for ease of reading, to tactile or high-contrast markings for kitchen safety, to talking devices such as large-number phones and talking clocks for communications needs. Financial need is not a consideration for taking part.

Average time from application to finish has decreased from 7.6 months to 6.5 months. It is great to have a fully staffed, active team around Ohio with the training and compassion to serve our elders desiring to continue full and independent lives, including 740 Ohioans age 80 or older. Please call 800-282-4536 or check out <http://www.ood.ohio.gov/Programs-br-Partnerships/Programs/Independent-Living/Independent-Living-Services-for-ILOB> for eligibility and service details.

ACBO Community Shares Campaign Codes

State of Ohio 19003
City of Columbus 60240
Franklin County 60240
Ohio State University 60240
Columbus State 1061

BITS & BYTES



► BSVI'S NEW RESOURCE GUIDE

BSVI's 2018 Vision Loss and Hearing Loss Resources document is now available at <http://ood.ohio.gov/Core-Services/BSVI/Vision-and-Hearing-Resources>.

Broken down by categories of general information, deaf-blind, deafness and blindness resources, the updated list contains hundreds of links and articles for education, technology, workplace, family/care giving and other types of useful public information. Note that this is an accessible document that may take 30-60 seconds to download.

► YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM SUMMER SESSION

The Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is now accepting applications for the summer 2018 session, which will be held July 22-26. YLF is an annual event hosted by OOD through which high school juniors and seniors with disabilities learn about choosing a career, self-advocacy and leadership development. To learn more about YLF and to apply, visit Youth Leadership Forum here: <http://ood.ohio.gov/Transition-br-Students/Youth-Leadership-Forum>

► COMPUTER CAREERS

With the goal of increasing participation of students with disabilities in computing fields, the Alliance for Access to Computing Careers offers disability-specific information to teachers, learners, employers and mentors here: <https://www.washington.edu/accesscomputing/about>

► ADVOCACY INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

As parents and teachers prepare for annual individualized education plans (IEPs), the American Council of the Blind (ACB) offers podcasts; "Improving advocacy inside and Outside of the Classroom." Presented in partnership with ACB's Special Education Committee, this two-part series provides an overview on existing laws, regulations, procedures and best practices for assuring that your student receives the best possible care. <http://acb.org/education>

► AFB GUIDE HELPS STUDENTS PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

AFB CareerConnect recently launched the Transition to College: Program Activity Guide for students with vision loss considering post-secondary education to achieve their career goals. It includes 24 activities available online, in printable format, and in downloadable UEB braille. Details and free download here: <https://>

www.afb.org/blog/careerconnect-blog/introducing-the-transition-to-college-program-activity-guide-for-students-with-visual-impairments/12

► **GOOGLE LAUNCHES DISABILITY SUPPORT TEAM**

Google has launched a dedicated disability support team available to answer questions about using assistive technology with Google products and accessibility features and functionalities. For an answer within three days, contact the team at disability-support-external@google.com . Additional details at <https://www.google.com/accessibility/blog/post/announce-disability-support.html>

► **HELP MAKE MICROSOFT ACCESSIBLE**

The Accessibility User Research Collective (AURC) is a national community of people with all types of disabilities interested in helping make Microsoft technology more accessible and usable. This website indicates additional details and opportunities for participation, some of which are compensated. <https://accessibilityuserresearchcollective.org/>

► **AUDIO DESCRIPTION APP**

From a movie lover who is blind, here's introducing a brand new app for audio description in the theatre. <https://>

www.visionaware.org/blog/visually-impaired-now-what/the-actview-app-allows-for-independent-audio-description-at-the-movies/12#content

► **FREE TAPES TEACH DAILY LIVING SKILLS**

E.A.R.S. for Eyes is a nonprofit that provides free of charge, audio cassette lesson tapes that teach adaptive daily living skills to people with vision impairments and caregivers. One example: Eating without Embarrassment. Call 1-800-843-6816 or visit <http://www.earsforeyes.info/>

► **SUPPORT GROUP FOR ASSISTANCE DOG LOSS**

Are you grieving the loss or impending retirement of your assistance dog? A monthly support group is available by phone with others in the same situation. IF YOU are interested, please email ADLC@iaadp.org . This and much additional information is available at International Association of Assistance Dog Partners. <http://www.iaadp.org/>

► **DISABILITY LEGISLATION RESOURCE CENTER**

Part of protecting and advocating for people with disabilities in Ohio is tracking important legislation proposed at the Statehouse and in Washington, D.C. Disability Rights Ohio monitors dozens of pieces of legislation. DRO has just launched a new Legislative Resource

Center which provides information about the most critical proposals at hand. Each page provides a summary, names and links to the bill's sponsors, links to the bill's status and important dates, including hearings. See <http://www.disabilityrightsohio.org/legislative-resource-center>

► CAREGIVER SUPPORT

This resource lists a wealth of elder and other care resources useful for any family related to someone with special needs, low vision in particular.

<http://www.visionaware.org/info/emotional-support/for-family-and-friends/guidance-for-caregivers-of-individuals-who-are-blind-or-visually-impaired/resource-list-for-caregivers-of-individuals-with-vision-loss-/1235>

► LIVING WELL WITH DIABETES

The Blind Diabetes Group Team seeks to support blind diabetics to live well with diabetes, gain independence, and make new friends. A conference call for general conversation and with various themes occurs each Tuesday at 2:00PM. Details and additional information/contacts here: <http://leads.usmed.com/prodigyvoice/> Related, read in this article a clear breakdown of what Medicare (especially parts B and D) offers for those who have diabetes. <https://boomerbenefits.com/medicare-and-diabetes/>

► LIVING WITH LOW VISION

This site offers up-to-date information and free materials for people living with low vision, their loved ones and the medical community from Prevent Blindness► . <http://lowvision.preventblindness.org/>

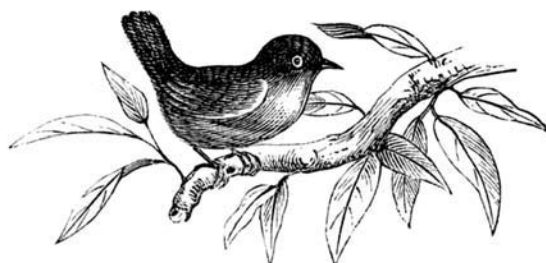
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The *Ohio Connection* is a quarterly publication of the American Council of the Blind of Ohio. Please submit your material in print or through e-mail, and include your name, address, and phone number. E-mail items to acbo.newsletter@gmail.com or send them to the address below by **May 15**.

**ACB-Ohio
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Columbus, Ohio 43214**

Phone: 614-261-3561





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FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND



ACB-OHIO DATEBOOK

APRIL 3

VISION EXPO
COLUMBUS MAIN LIBRARY, 5-7 PM

APRIL 21

ACBO BOARD MEETING
CONFERENCE CALL 9 AM

MAY 6

FLYING PIG MARATHON
CINCINNATI
FLYINGPIGMARATHON.COM

MAY 15

ACBO NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

JUNE 29-JULY 6

ACB CONFERENCE & CONVENTION
UNION STATION HOTEL
ST. LOUIS, MO

JULY 10

OLBPD FAMILY FUN & LEARNING DAY
CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

JULY 21

ACBO BOARD MEETING
CONFERENCE CALL 9 AM

AUGUST 1

ACBO SCHOLARSHIP
APPLICATION DEADLINE

AUGUST 3-5

ACBO SUMMER SPORTS RETREAT
HOCKINGPORT, OH

SEPTEMBER 8

ACBO AWARD NOMINATION DEADLINE

NOVEMBER 2-4

ACBO / ACB INDIANA JOINT
CONFERENCE AND CONVENTION
INDIANAPOLIS