



TUCSON SOCIETY OF THE BLIND (TSB)

P.O. Box 57655. Tucson, AZ 85732

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2020 NEWSY NOTES

TSB meets every Tuesday – 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Christ Presbyterian Church, 6565 E. Broadway

Come when you can and leave when you must. Bring a sack lunch. For more information call Barbara, 298-2427 or Tom, 721-1029

www.tucsonocietyoftheblind.org

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- 4 Janet Dylla from Desert Low vision, “Showing the Latest Technology”. Let Barb know what you are going to bring to the February 11 potluck**
- 11 Bill Martin guitar player, playing “oldies, country, rock and roll tunes.”
Potato Bar Potluck, stay until 12:30**
- 14 TSB Board Meeting 10:00am-1:00pm Biscuit Country Cafe 7026 E. Broadway**
- 18 Tarik Williams, Orientation and Mobility Instructor from SAAVI and
President of the National Federation of the Blind Tucson Chapter**
- 25 Researchers from University of Arizona. Pam Sands, “Chair Exercise and
Meditation”
Due to Church rummage sale, we will not be meeting at the church for 3
weeks.**

MARCH

- 3 Reid Park Zoo trip and visit to Purple Penguin Candy Store. See details in
announcements below**
- Thursday, March 5, TSB Spring Concert 8111 E. Broadway, Villa 2 Great Room,
6-8:30p.m.**
- Friday, March 6 TSB Spring Concert, 8111 E. Broadway, Villa 2 Great Room,
6-8:30p.m.**
- 10 Hungry Fox Restaurant, 4637 E. Broadway, 10:00a.m.-12:30p.m., Enjoy a
good lunch and play a fun game**
- 12 TSB Board Meeting 10:00am-1:00pm Biscuit Country Cafe 7026 E. Broadway**
- 17 TBA**
- 24 Jeff Babson, Biologist, “Desert Animals”**
- 31 John McCann, American Council of the Blind**

Announcements

March 3, Field trip to the Reid Park Zoo, 3400 E. Zoo Court, Cost \$10. Meet at 9:30a.m. at the entrance to the zoo. Bring a sack lunch. TSB will provide chips, cookies, and water. TSB members will enjoy and participate in the Zoo Adventure at 10:00a.m. in the zoo classroom in the education building. We will learn about how the zoo takes care of the animal's health. Also, we will meet several animal ambassadors. We need 20 people to go. TSB will also get to see the new Squirrel Monkey Asian Habitat. Let Barb know by Feb 25 if you are coming. There are lots of places to sit. Plan on eating lunch at noon. After the zoo visit we are going to the Purple Penguin Candy Store, 3392 E. 22nd St. The establishment is an old-fashioned candy and drink store. Will give members rides home.

TSB Dues of \$15 Needed

Please pay your TSB 2020 Dues of \$15. TSB Dues are due in Jan. 2020. The dues pay for luncheons, entertainment, and printing of the newsletter. What a deal! Any extra financial donations are also appreciated.

President's Message by Barbara Macpherson

It's time to buy your TSB Spring Concerts tickets for Thursday, March 5 and Friday March 6 at Fellowship Square, 8111 E. Broadway, from 6:00-8:30p.m. On Thursday, TSB will have harpist, Christine Vivona, and trombonist, Rob Boone, performing jazz, classical, and Broadway tunes. On Friday TSB will have Western singer, Bill Gantz with 23 years in the business performing cowboy music on the guitar. Tickets for the fantastic concerts each night are \$10 each. Call Barb 298-2427, or Fellowship Lifestyle Office 731-3003 for tickets. There will be a silent auction each night with items donated from over 50 businesses. Many of the items are 50% off. What a bargain! This is TSB's major fundraiser and all funds raised go to support TSB's programs. A raffle drawing will be held on Friday, March 6. Grand Prize is \$100. Second prize is two theater tickets, and third prize is a \$25 gift card. Tickets are 12 for \$10, or 6 tickets for \$5. TSB members need to sell concert tickets and raffle tickets to family and friends.

An informative book on BARD and the AZ Talking Book Library is "When You Can't Believe Your Eyes, Vision Loss and Personal Recovery" by Hannah Fairbairn. With a special emphasis on the challenges faced by seniors with failing vision, this highly practical how-to focuses on practical, social, and personal recovery for adults who are losing their sight.

The section I liked best was on assertive speech. Assertive speech is asking for what you need with respect. Hannah suggested role playing answers ahead of time. Here are some suggestions for when waiting in line. Once in line, ask the person ahead or behind you to let you know when it is your turn. Also, to get the attention of the cashier, ask "Are you ready for me now?" I have been practicing using assertive speech and found Hannah's book to be helpful.

Direct Center for Independence, 520 561-8778, by Annie Schlesinger

Recently I met with staff members at Direct Center who were helpful to me in adjusting to my vision loss. Kathy, Orientation and Mobility instructor, gave me help on my mobility skills. We also discussed my problems in facing vision loss. Scott reviewed using the iPhone. Lupita shared everyday tips about living with blindness. They were all productive visits which are free and I can return if I need to. I called them at 520-561-8778, had an intake appointment with Hannah and had scheduled appointments within a week. According to their website, Direct Center works with blind and other disabilities through Life skills training, information and referral, peer support, and advocacy.

Direct Center for Independence.
1001 N. Alvernon Way www.Directilc.org

News You Can Use by Barbara Macpherson

I ordered four red trays from Maxi Aids at about \$8 including shipping and taxes. I like to use trays when cooking. If you are looking for a washer and dryer consider GE. For \$100 you can buy a module which plugs in and turns the machines into talking ones. Another tip: use a spot liner pen on a touch screen and make a circle on where you should touch the button. Another resource is the Accessible Product Hotline where trained visually impaired individuals answer the phone. All telephone numbers will be at the end of this article. Please note that the Foundation Fighting Blindness has the wrong number in the resource list. FFB will provide free genetic testing for those with macular degeneration or retinitis pigmentosa in your own doctor's office.

AIRA, a paid service where visual interpreters describe items for the visually impaired by using the camera in your iPhone. If your call is less than five minutes, they will help you for free. I enjoyed listening to the podcast, Life after Blindness at www.lifeafterblindness.com. Another way to listen to it is to ask the Echo Dot, Alexa to play Life after Blindness podcast. One item I learned about from the podcast is a new product called sleep phones. Sleep phones are head phones on a head band covered in fleece, available in small, medium, and large. Most individuals use medium. Listening to music can help you sleep at night. In order to use the wireless Bluetooth sleep phones, you need an iPad or iPhone. Corded sleep phones are \$39.99. Bluetooth speakers and pre-tracked sleep phones are preloaded with white noise, nature sounds, and piano music at a cost of \$99.99. Many enjoy these sleep phones and they come with free shipping and a free 30 day return policy.

Important Phone Numbers

Accessible Product Hotline, 316-252-2500,
AIRA 800-835-1934
Foundation Fighting Blindness, 800-683-5555, www.fightblindness.org,
info@fightblindness.org.
Maxi Aids 800-522-6294, 631 -752-0521
Sleep Phones. 877-838-4790, www.sleepphones.com

Eye Talk by Annie Schlesinger

Memory

As I age I notice my memory is not as good as it used to be. As we age we also experience some loss of touch sensitivity, taste, eyesight, hearing and problems with balance. Of course I want to do what I can to maintain my facilities - particularly memory. I've heard it said blind people have the best memories; well, we depend on memory a lot!

Memory is network structures, storage of information and the ability to recall information when needed. It is now believed memory loss isn't inevitable. Our brain can grow new pathways and new connections by learning new things and staying engaged.

Fleeting memory lapses are more upsetting as we get older; we fear loss of intellectual function and worry do we have dementia! Most of the fleeting problems reflect normal changes in the brain, making it a bit harder to learn new things quickly.

Some symptoms of dementia are forgetting routine things constantly, trouble learning new things and difficulty with complex tasks. It seems to be a matter of degree, small lapse are okay, but more and more of the ones cited here are troublesome and need evaluation by a professional.

Anything that helps the body helps the mind such as good nutrition and exercise. Lifelong learning is excellent. Slow down, live in the moment. Reduce stress and be aware of how stress affects you.

I read that in order to enhance memory one could move something and try to remember the new location. I didn't like this idea as I am organized: my keys always go in their tray, cane goes beside the door, and so on always. But I did decide to move the soap dispenser to the opposite side of the sink; someday I will switch it back. I switch hands to brush my teeth and I am attempting to perform more tasks with my non-dominant hand to create new pathways in my brain.

Strategies

1. **Keep learning.** Challenge your brain with activities such as puzzles, gardening, dancing or learning new words.
2. **Use all your senses.** For example, try to guess smells in restaurants and elsewhere.
3. **Believe in yourself.** Believe you can maintain and improve.
4. **Economize your brain use.** Organize and keep distractions to a minimum. Focus on new information you want to remember. (My favorite: Don't waste your brain power being disorganized.)
5. **Repeat what you want to learn.** Repeat it several times, and if you can, write it down.
6. **Space it out.** Repetition is best when it is studied after longer periods of time. Let some time go by and repeat what you want to remember.

7. **Make a mnemonic. For example, use RICE to remember first-aid for injured limbs: Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation. Associate the first letter of a new name with something familiar. Practicing these strategies will help you build your memory.**

(References: MDsupport, Harvard Health)

Call to Action: TSB Members Call State Legislators On Two Issues

Issue #1 is to support a bill to provide accessible ballots by mail for the blind to vote independently at home by using specialized software on their computer or iPhone. Also the Secretary of the State and county official need to provide and maintain accessible voting machines at the polls for the blind to have a secret ballot. Issue # 2 is to restore \$500,000 to the AZ Independent Blind Program which was taken away in 2009. There are about 78,000 visually impaired seniors in AZ. There is a long waiting list for visually impaired seniors waiting for services.

In 2009, the Department of Economic Security (DES) Independent Living program for the blind among many other programs was cut by \$500,000. In the past 10 years, the DES Independent Living Program for the Blind has received no additional funding while all other comparable programs have received budget increases. Independent Living Blind services are not provided anywhere else. Independent Living Blind Services provides mobility training, daily living skills and assistive technology to keep visually impaired seniors independent at home.

It only takes a few minutes to call Tucson legislators. The more TSB Members that call, the better. These are two important issues to visually impaired seniors and you can make a difference by calling soon and letting your opinion be known. To reach the legislators, call 844-872-0234. Press 2 and put my zip code 85730 or your own zip code for District 10. For District 9 use zip code 85704, for District 8 use 85706, and for District 11, use 85743 to reach all Tucson legislators. The call will automatically connect you to state officials. Use the # key to get to the next official. You can also mention the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) who are promoting these issues. Mention if you have benefitted from Independent Living Blind Skills Program. Mention that you are legally blind or know someone that is visually impaired living in Tucson. You can leave messages on all Tucson legislators' phones, regardless of which district you live in.

- Why can't you borrow money from a leprechaun? Because they're always a little bit short.**
- What do you get when you cross poison ivy and a shamrock? A rash of good luck.**
- Never iron a four leaf clover, you don't want to press your luck.**
- What do you get when you cross a pillowcase and a stone? A shamrock**
- What do you call an Irish man sitting on the couch? paddy o furniture**
- Two Irish Jokes**

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- • **I went out drinking on St Patricks Day, so I took a bus home. That may not be a big deal to you, but I've never driven a bus before.**
- • **How is a best friend like a 4-leaf clover? They are both hard to find and lucky to have.**
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