National Senior Division Business Meeting July 2019

The meeting began at 1:15 p.m. Ruth Sager, President, began with listing the agenda for the meeting.

Ruth introduced Robert Leslie Newman as our webmaster for our division. He records the conference calls which are also sponsored by the Senior Division. He gave our website at: seniors.nfb.org. He described all of the information that is on this website such as links for: conference calls; talking books; connecting with senior divisions in 14 states; a link to sign up for our list serve; and a link for a list of our officers.

We had several seniors give their impressions of our first National Senior retreat held in South Carolina at Rocky Bottom. Geri McGinty gave her age as 75, and said that she had worn shades to an apple orchard and how she shopped with her shades on. She said that they really feed you in South Carolina! She talked about the power going out in the camp one evening, and how it might have been a plot by the staff to insure the wearing of shades! She talked about using your knowledge and that she was happy for the experience of this training. Also, that there were many fun times such as a talent show.

Pat Pyle spoke that it was a life changing experience, and that she really hadn’t wanted to go. She flew by herself, and that it was hard to ask for help. She said that she now uses her cane and that she has learned Braille having read 300pages. Pat talked about the field trip which included a distillery and how that was a blast! She also met a gentleman who talked to her about his difficulties with having a head injury and expressed how there is more to life than our focus on our difficulties. She really likes to help others.

Ed Poindexter spoke of the wonderful time he had, and how he found a new family! His goal has been to become a deacon in his church, and how he did not have all of the tools for accomplishing this. He has found out about these tools for his toolbox; one of them being to open your mouth, and ask.

Peggy Chong spoke with us about being the Blind History Lady, and how she finds our blind ancestors throughout history who have lived lives which have enhanced our purposes. One of these individuals was John Sweringer from South Carolina who was a lawyer and the State Superintendent of Education in the early 1900’s.

Another lady was Elena Zelayeth, a blind Hispanic lady who was a cook and had her own cooking show.

Peggy gave her email address: theblindhistorylady@gmail.com

Dan Frye, a representative from Aira described this technology. He mentioned that Aira was located in the Exhibit Hall at B-5, and that they were offering the free use of Aira for the duration of the conference. He described that this technology was a bridge to sighted information.

Dale Holden from the Seniors in Charge program at the Colorado Center for the Blind and Dr. Bryan Delude from Blind Inc., located in Minnesota spoke about senior programs in their respective states.

Then we focused on what senior divisions are doing in other states: Susie Stanzel from Kansas spoke about the Senior division, and all that they are doing. They have been having conference calls once a month. Larry Sebranek from Idaho said that their seniors meet for lunch and have rather casual meetings.

Sandy Halverson from Virginia, and Judy Sanders from Minnesota also spoke

Rickie Enger from Hadley Institute spoke about their 100 year birthday in the year 2020. She talked about discussion groups, technology instructional videos, a podcast called Hadley Presents, and about their website, Hadley.edu, where you can acquire your diploma.

Our treasurer’s report indicated $2509.87. We give $60 per month to the PAC plan; and $200 are committed to each fund. We voted to keep these same amounts this year. We also have a 50/50 raffle going on this convention. We approved the minutes from last year’s convention. Glen Crosby and Jane Degenshein were re-elected as board members.

Our meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Coppel, Secretary