July 7, 2022

Minutes of our annual Senior Division meeting at the 2022 National Convention.

Our meeting was called to order at 12:59 p.m. by our 1st Vice President Judy Sanders.  She read to the group assembled the Covid Protocol that the convention drafted for all attendees to follow.  We then moved into a time of silence to remember those who had passed in this last year, to include, Ruth Sager our Senior Division President.  We then welcomed those in attendance and recognized them by their state of residence.  We did our best to include the zoom population of folks who were not able to attend the convention in person.  There were some technical issues and we hope to correct them for the future.  The minutes from last year’s meeting had been posted on-line, and they were approved by the membership in attendance. The treasurer’s report was given by our treasurer Sue (Duncan) Larsen and reads as follows: the beginning balance as of July 1, 2021 was $3530.64; and the ending balance as of July 1, 2022 is: $2913.77

Mr. Darryl Rice, and Ms. Katie Pinkney spoke about their experiences when they attended the “In-Person” National Senior Retreat which was held at Rocky Bottom Retreat and Conference Center of the Blind in South Carolina.  They both spoke of the independence they  experienced through the learning of cane travel, home management/cooking, Braille, and assistive technology.  The fact that they had come to a place of completely new surroundings, and were able to leave with a degree of renewed confidence in themselves and their skills was very encouraging to hear.  Jessica Beecham spoke next on the importance of eating healthy, and including exercise into our lives on a daily and weekly basis.  All of these habits work together to keep our mental health in check as well.  Next, we heard from Candis Chapman about how Covid has affected our lives creating stress in terms of going out, or being able to get together with others.  She advised that we might not want to do all of the activities that we once felt comfortable doing and that we need to feel okay about that decision. We need to take one step at a time!Following this discussion, Glenn Crosby from Texas and Sandy Halverson from Virginia described the Silver Bell program for blind seniors.  This program has been established to teach the senior population needed skills training for the purposes of maintaining independence, safety, and the ability to live in ones own home.  These skills are modeled off of the Bell program for young students.  The areas of instruction include: cane travel, smart devices, newsline, attitudes about blindness, beginning Braille to include some fun competition   for learning purposes, and all of this training is accomplished by wearing learning shades.  We teach non-visual techniques that become habit with practice and will work no matter what our vision condition happens to be.  Glenn Crosby then discussed the purpose for the Senior Division.

We then conducted elections for the next two years with one exception.

President: Glenn Crosby; First Vice President: Judy Sanders; Second Vice President: Suzanne Turner; Secretary: Shelley Coppel; Treasurer: Sue (Duncan) Larsen; Board members: Jane Degenshein, and Sandy Halverson.

Sandy Halverson is   fulfilling the second year of a two year term formerly held by Glenn Crosby.  With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shelley Coppel, Secretary