

# **“Sightings”**

of the  
**Wyoming Council of the Blind**  
February 2016

**2016**

**Volume 1**

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By Sandy Behounek

## **In Remembrance**

I am sorry to report that we have lost two of our long time members, Sue Bulman and Fred Eiserman. Both Sue and Fred had been dealing with serious health issues for a very long time. We will miss their sunny smiles and warm friendship.

WyCB extends our deepest sympathy to Sue and Fred’s families and friends. May God grant you comfort in your time of sorrow.

## **President’s Message**

By Tom Lealos

I hope you and your family had a very Blessed and Joyous Holliday Season and I wish you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.

**As I put the finishing touches on the materials for the registration packets for our upcoming convention I'm reminded that this will be the last convention that I will preside as the WyCB president. I'm remembering all of the fine people I've worked with, the numerous things we accomplished in the last four years, and if the organization will be in good hands after I step down. WyCB's future depends on the criteria we use to elect our new officers.**

**During the annual Board meeting at last year's convention we considered and passed a motion to amend our by-laws to not only allow visually impaired and blind, but sighted individuals to serve as president and vice-president.**

**Irregardless of the outcome, It was noted that there had been some irregularities in the voting. To resolve this matter the Board voted to table this amendment at its July, 2015 meeting and to revisit the amendment during the annual membership meeting at the 2016 convention.**

**To this end, we will consider a new procedural by-law amendment that addresses how votes on proposed amendments are taken and counted, and then re-introduce the original proposed amendment for a proper vote. You will hear more about this in the May edition of our newsletter so it is fresh on your mind for the convention on June 4<sup>th</sup>.**

**This year, we will be voting for a new President, a Secretary, and three new Directors, in conformance with our by-laws. We will also need a Board member with writing ability to take over as the editor of our "Sightings" Newsletter. I've appointed a nominating committee to draft a slate of individuals to fill these positions. I know that this will not be an easy task.**

**Especially considering the pending by-law amendment, so I'm asking each of you to consider stepping up and serving on the WyCB Board. The Board is in need of fresh blood and new concepts.**

**If you are so inclined to take on one of these positions, please call Howard Hein at (307)234-5867 or Muriel McNeely at (307)234-5688. Your involvement will be the measure of WyCB's future success.**

## **Please Get Involved**

**The members of WyCB are to be commended. All of us, each and every one have joined together for the benefit of the Visually Impaired and Blind of Wyoming. It's up to those of us who are involved to welcome and encourage others who are dealing with visual impairments. It's a lonely and scary world to cope with a disability on your own and there's no reason anyone should have to do so.**

**Apathy and inertia are our enemies! It's easy to wait for someone else to do the work, to have ideas, to give support, but if we all step back, who is left to go forward? This is the way our services, our rights and our voices are lost.**

**The phrase, "united we stand and divided we fall" aren't just empty words. It's up to those of us who stand united to reach out a helping hand to a brother or sister in need.**

**For the want of a nail the horse was lost.  
For the want of a horse the rider was lost.  
For the want of a rider the battle was lost.  
For the want of a battle the war was lost.  
For the want of a war the Kingdom was lost.  
All for the want of a nail!**

**Don't be the nail that lost the Kingdom! Join the Board as a member, or share thoughts and ideas with your Board, let them know you're there to support and help. After all, WyCB belongs to each and everyone of us!**

**Become involved with a support group, or if there is no available support group close to you, start one. Talk to people and offer your friendship and hold out a helping hand. Encourage others to join WyCB as a member. Discuss ScripTalk with your Pharmacist and let them know we're here!**

**Please do not allow our many opportunities to be wasted! They will disappear if we are apathetic or won't avail ourselves of their use, and if you haven't noticed, we are losing them!**

## **ScripTalk**

**WyCB is continuing in our efforts to bring ScripTalk and ScriptView to the people of Wyoming. If any of you have ideas that may help, please let Howard Hein, our Vice President know. You may contact him at 307)234-5867.**

**Following is a description of the devices for our new members who may not be informed of their use:**

**ScripTalk is an audio device for those of us who have difficulty or who are unable to read our medication labels. ScripTalk not only reads the information contained on the label, but reads the list of side effects as well,. It is about the size of a boxed cake mix and comes with an adjustable volume control. ScripTalk is simple to learn and operate and comes with both audio and printed instructions.**

**ScriptView is a large print label, for those of us who have a problem reading small print, but do not require a full audio device.**

**To receive ScripTalk or ScriptView a doctor's referral is not necessary; however, a participating pharmacy must order the device for you. There is no charge to you the consumer and you do not have to be blind to qualify! Whether your struggles with labels stem from vision loss, dyslexia, illiteracy, or if you are far sighted, near sighted or struggle with bi or tri-vocals and aren't able to read labels without magnifiers, you qualify. You do not have to be a WyCB member to apply, so tell your friends and relatives about them!**

**This is one of those opportunities we can't afford to waste! Not being able to read your medication label is life threatening folks! Take this offer dead seriously! APPLY FOR ONE and USE IT!**

**If you have questions, please contact Howard Hein at 307-234-5867 [heinsited2@yahoo.com](mailto:heinsited2@yahoo.com)**

**If your Pharmacist has questions, or wishes to participate in this program, have them contact Amanda Tolson with EnVision America at 1-800-890-1180, or [www.envisionamerica.com](http://www.envisionamerica.com)**

**At the present time the Walmart and Sam's corporations are participating in this program. If your local Walmart or Sam's haven't heard of it, have them check with their company, or have them contact Amanda with Envision America. Other Pharmacies are considering caring the device, contingent on the people of Wyoming's interest. Let them hear from you!**

## **2016 June Convention**

**You are invited to attend the 2016 State Convention to be held in Casper Wyoming on June 4<sup>th</sup>, at the Ramkota Hotel and Convention center 307-266-6000, 800 N. Poplar.**

**By Popular demand, this year's convention will be a one day affair. Presentations will focus on the many problems we all face when we lose our vision, and how to "COPE" with them. Since both family and friends are affected, you are encouraged to bring them with you. There will be useful information for everyone who attends.**

**You will also have the opportunity to elect some new officers and directors, as well as, vote on minor by-law changes at the Membership Meeting in the afternoon.**

**We will have very nice door prizes to be given away throughout the day. New this year, will be a "50/50" raffle. Tickets will be sold all day and the holder of the winning ticket will receive half of the proceeds at the close of the convention.**

**A hit last year, a Western buffet lunch will again be served. It will include a selection for vegetarians. We will also be presenting awards during the lunch hour. Our “Member of the Year” plaque will be given to one of our unsuspecting members and a deserving student will be awarded our annual scholarship.**

**We will end the day with the always popular live auction. If you have an interesting item to donate to the cause, please call Betty Hazen at (307)234-2963.**

**The convention will be held at the Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center located at 800 N. Poplar, in Casper. A block of rooms has been reserved for those coming from out of town. To make reservations call: (307)266-6000. Be sure to mention that you are attending the WyCB Convention. Room rates are again, \$83.00, for one or four occupants.**

**This year’s registration fee is only \$30.00 per person. Please fill out the registration form that will be mailed to you. Send the registration form along with your check, to our Treasurer, Muriel McNeely, at 1825 Bellaire Drive. Casper, WY 82604. Registrations received after May 16<sup>th</sup> or at the door will be charged an additional \$5.00, so plan to register early.**

**Come to get useful information, a fine lunch and refreshments, and enjoy the fellowship with old and new friends. See you at the Ramkota!!**

**Wyoming Council of the Blind**  
**2016 State Convention**  
**Saturday, June 4 – Casper, WY**  
**Program**

**\*\*Coping With Sight Loss\*\***

- 8:30 AM**      **Convention Opening**
- **Pledge of Allegiance**
  - **Invocation – Bishop Randy Holman, Casper 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward, from            The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints**
  - **Welcome – Tom Lealos, WyCB President**
- 9:00 AM**      **ACB Message – Allan Peterson, ACB Liaison**
- 9:30 AM**      **Break**
- 9:45 AM**      **“From Light to Darkness in Five Years”**  
**Dr. Bill Takeshita, Chief of Optometry**  
**Center for the Partially sighted, Los Angeles**
- 10:45 AM**      **“Coping with the Emotions from Sight Loss”**  
**Cheryl Godley, Ph.D., Psychologist**  
**Windy Ridge Psychological Services, Casper**
- 12:00 PM**      **Buffet Lunch and Awards**
- 1:00 PM**      **“Wyoming Independent Living VIP Program and Vision Outreach Services Dept. of Education Wyoming Services”**  
**Leslie VanOrman, Program Manager**  
**Vision Outreach Services, Riverton**  
**And**  
**Laurel Henry, Lead VIP Specialist/**  
**Training Coordinator**  
**WIL/Visually Impaired Program, Casper**



- 3:00 PM**      **Break**
- 3:15 PM**      **Annual Membership Meeting (will include vote on by-law, Amendments and new Directors & Officers)**
- 4:00 PM**      **Live Fundraising Auction**
- 5:00 PM**      **50/50 Raffle drawing, Closing remarks and Adjourn**

## **Auction Appeal**

**Betty Hazen at 307-234-2963 and Sue Blevins at 307-333-1679, are the committee in charge of organizing this year's annual auction at the June 4<sup>th</sup> Convention.**

**We hope all of you can attend the convention and we are looking forward to visiting both old and new friends. We are again asking for donations for this rollicking, fun filled event. Remember, it's not only a good time, but the proceeds from this auction help fund the WyCB's operating expenses throughout the year.**

**Tom Lealos has again agreed to be the auctioneer for this year's event. If you've never been to one of Tom's auctions, you are definitely missing a laugh filled good time.**

**Our members have proven to be extremely generous with their donations and we depend on you and thank you. This year, since our Convention is for one day only, our time is limited. Betty and Sue need to be informed of what you are bringing,**

so they may plan the time accordingly. They are asking you to please give one of them a call and keep them informed about your donations.

Since there was so much interest shown in the Snow Magnifier raffle during last year's Convention, we will again be drawing for a Snow Magnifier at our June 4<sup>th</sup> Convention this year, as well as drawing for door prizes. We will also be selling tickets for a 50/50 drawing. At the end of the day, a name will be drawn and the winner will receive 50% of the money sold for the tickets, and 50% will go to WyCB.

Thank you again WyCB members, for making our annual auction so lively and such a rousing success!

## **The Hadley School for the Blind**

There is an important resource available to us, the Hadley School for the Blind.

I myself have taken courses through The Hadley School and have had very good experiences with them. The school is easy to work with and they offer an amazingly wide range of courses. From time to time, exercising our brain cells and widening our horizons is important, as well as boosting our self-confidence. You have nothing to lose and much to gain so give them a call and ask them to send you a catalogue!

**The Hadley School for the Blind's toll free number is 1-800-323-4238. Call and order a catalogue.**

**Sheryl Bass with The Hadley School for the Blind has kindly sent us some background information on the school. It is as follows:**

## **About The Hadley School for the Blind**

**Founded in 1920, The Hadley School for the Blind's mission is to promote independent living through lifelong, distance education programs for people who are blind or visually impaired, their families and blindness service providers. The world's largest educator of braille, Hadley serves nearly 10,000 students in all 50 states and 100 countries each year and thousands more through Seminars@Hadley, free "just in time" webinars on a variety of vision-related topics.**

**For more information, visit [www.hadley.edu](http://www.hadley.edu) or call 1-800-323-4238.**

**Sheryl Bass, M.A., M.S.W.  
Hadley School for the Blind  
Media and Marketing Specialist**

**Thank you, Sheryl, for sharing your information with us.**

**It is my hope that the members of WyCB will take full advantage of your School. We are never too young or too old to learn and grow.**

# **Meet Your Board Members**

**Sandra Behounek**

**Hi all! My name is Sandra Behounek and I am a Director on the WyCB Board and am the Editor of “Sightings”.**

**I was born in Casper on March 21, 1952. I had two brothers, Larry, who was the oldest and Gene, who was the youngest, and I fit comfortably in the middle.**

**We raised chickens, rabbits and had a large garden. My Mother suffered from a long term illness, so I learned to skin rabbits, pick chickens and do home canning, housekeeping and laundry starting at the age of 10. I took care of my brother Gene, who was a few years younger than I. He used to call our Mother ‘Big Mom’, and he called me ‘Little Mom’.**

**All the kids in our neighborhood belonged to 4H and I was in it for several years. Our lives revolved around displays at the Fair. I learned cooking, gardening, cake decorating, sewing, embroidery, and knitting.**

**The biggest love of my life however, was drawing and painting. Reading came in at a close second. As I grew older, I began to paint portraits and I’d thought I’d found my perfect niche. I also liked to draw for kids and completed a course in illustrating books for children.**

**My husband Jon and I have one son, Daniel, who is presently the Secretary of our WyCB Board. Daniel has ADHD and was always in perpetual motion.**

**At the age of 20, my eyes began tearing inside, but my doctor told me not to worry, because they could be easily repaired. He didn't seem unduly concerned, so I tried not to worry either. My eyes seemed to be holding their own until, at the age of 33, I woke up one morning and was unable to see out of my right eye.**

**I went to an Ophthalmologist, who diagnosed Histoplasmosis, but when I flew to Denver for laser surgery, the doctor there gave me a different diagnosis entirely. Over the next three years I had several laser surgeries, and from three different doctors, I received three completely different diagnosis.**

**My Ophthalmologist sent me to an eye specialist in San Francisco. He was sure it was Histo, but said we had to know for sure. I was scared and confused, and was really glad to go. The specialist confirmed I did indeed have Histoplasmosis. They tried to treat it with high doses of Steroids. The Steroids didn't work and I'm still carrying the extra 70 pounds I gained!**

**Histoplasmosis is a parasite that lives in your body. They say I'm not contagious and I guess they're right, because I don't know anyone else who has it. The doctors are pretty sure I was exposed during a trip I took through the Mississippi River Basin when I was 19. We visited caves that contained bats. You can also catch Histo from bird droppings. 80% of America's Histoplasmosis has its origins in the Mississippi River Basin. The specialist told me that there's about 300 of us scattered around the Nation. Most people's systems fight it off, but for some reason, mine didn't. Histo can develop in any organ of your body. I'm just lucky it picked a spot that wasn't life threatening.**

**There is nothing they can do to treat Histo in the eyes, My sight deteriorates every year, but my doctor thinks I'll always be able to distinguish light from dark.**

**My easel, brushes, paints, and car keys were the hardest for me to give up. My hands ached to hold a paint brush And my life felt empty. One day I decided to enroll in a course on writing stories for children and discovered I could paint pictures with words. It's very satisfying indeed! I may never get anything published, and was told by Voc. Rehab .that writing is not a viable occupation, but I don't care. I enjoy it!**

**Every year, I was the Room Mother and Parent Liaison at my son's school and became more and more concerned with his education levels. Because of his ADHD, Danny's doctor recommended we pull him out of Public School, he wasn't surviving the system. What was I to do? I rolled up my sleeves and began the job of home schooling. Who says a blind woman can't teach math and sentence diagraming? I can't see words or numbers printed on a page, and we didn't have a computer, but oh well. I took him off the Ritalin the school had suggested, because I didn't care if he learned to read the dictionary while standing on his head, and he learned!**

**Jon and I helped petition for the Academy School In Casper,. We worked hard, and when the Academy School opened, Danny tested for a place and passed with flying colors, in fact he tested in the top 1% of the nation on his SAT's . I was proud of him and was proud of myself as well, but to be honest, I was relieved to have him back in school; before he figured out he's smarter than me.**

**For several years, I served on the Board of Christian Education at our Church and went on to sit on the Pre-School Board as well. I was in charge of our Church library and taught Sunday School.**

**Sometimes I wonder if I'm really cut out to be an adult, because my imagination lives in a world of dragons, flying pigs, Pixie dust, sheep with knitting needles, and purple cows.**

**Serving on the WyCB Board has been a wonderful experience for me. The people I've served with are so giving, interesting, and kind. I will miss them. Hopefully, when my family health issues have improved, I'll be back, but for now, I'll be one of a warm, giving and friendly WyCB membership!**

## **A Plea from a Vietnamese School for the Blind**

**Minh Ha**

**Second Vice President, American Council of Blind Students**

**(774) 242-4860**

**secondvicepresident@acbstudents.net**

**Hello all,**

**Happy New Year! I am writing to request donations for a school for the blind in Vietnam, where I am from originally. My mom will be going back to Vietnam at the end of March, and she is visiting the school for the blind that I attended when I lost my vision at the age of 7. It's a school for the blind, but it**

**doubles as an orphanage since a lot of blind children in the country are abandoned by parents and relatives. A group of Catholic nuns run the school, and they solely rely on donations from visitors to give the students an education.**

**Here is my request: If you have old canes (doesn't matter how old or battered), slates and styluses, talking/braille watches, or any small blindness related items that you no longer use, I would love to take them off of your hands. My mom can bring these items back with her and donate them to the school. They will appreciate any contributions, regardless of the condition.**

**Feel free to email me if you have any questions and please share with anyone you think would be interested in donating; thank you so much for your assistance in advance.**

**Donations may be sent to:**

**Min Ha**

**38 Russell St., Apt. #2**

**Worcster, Mass. 01609**

**Best,  
Minh**

**Follow us on Twitter @ACBStudents**

**Join our Facebook Group:**

**<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ACBStudents/>**



# **A Technology Moment**

**By Daniel Behounek**

**We at WyCB do not endorse any Speech to Text program over another. The choice of programs is entirely your own. The last issue of “Sightings” offered a description of several programs that had companies to help you with installation. Since this particular program does not have a company to assist you, I will attempt to help you with basic instructions.**

## **NVDA Text to Speech**

**NVDA is a free text to speech screen reader, and is available through the internet at [www.nvaccess.org](http://www.nvaccess.org).**

**Donations are gratefully accepted, but not mandatory. NVDA uses the proceeds from donations to support its creators and to fund future upgrades.**

**The program my Mother uses is for Windows 7. There may be variations when opened on different types of computers or versions of Windows.**

**Depending on the level of your sight, you may require the assistance of a sighted helper, or a knowledgeable assistant to initially install this program. Keep in mind, Gary Olson, the VOS Consultant for the Big Horn Basin, at (307)754-2147, email: [gary.olson@wyo.gov](mailto:gary.olson@wyo.gov) has offered his assistance by phone or email, to anyone who is in need.**

**NVDA reads most, but not all text on your computer. It reads some, but not all Internet sites.**

## **NVDA Screen Reader:**

**1. To download: The current link to the download page is [www.nvaccess.org/download](http://www.nvaccess.org/download)**

**If this link does not work, it may have been changed. You will have to use Google, or some other search engine, to find the current link.**

**2. Once you have navigated to the download page:**

**You will find a purple box asking for donations, click if you wish to donate. Do not click on it if you do not wish to donate.**

**3. Underneath the purple box, there is an orange box that says download. Enter your email address above this box.**

**As soon as your email address has been entered, click the orange box, and the download will automatically begin.**

**Computers with Windows XP through Windows 8.1 download the file to the downloads folder by default.**

**4. Navigate to the download folder:**

**Double click on the file you just downloaded, the name will vary by release version. This will start the installation wizard.**

**5. Click next in the lower right corner:**

**Follow the onscreen prompts as you would any other application.**

**In order to further configure NVDA to your tastes there are a variety of options:**

**After the program has been installed and you start your NVDA for the very first time, a dialogue box will be displayed, which will give you information about NVDA.**

**1. If you agree to have the NVDA default key to be Caps Lock, click on it, or you may change the NVDA default Key to any key you choose to use.**

**2. In order for NVDA to begin automatically when you turn on your computer (to boot), click the box. If you would rather turn NVDA on and off manually do not click this box.**

**3. If you want the NVDA welcome to appear on screen every time, click on it.**

**You may use your mouse to select the following menu, and options. Or you may use the keyboard shortcuts, and the arrow keys to navigate the opened menu. Use the space bar key to check or uncheck options boxes, and the enter key to open or select commands.**

### **General Settings:**

**To open the General Settings menu, press the NVDA key + control + G (all three of these keys must be held down together). This will open your General Settings menu. There are several options in this menu:**

**1. To automatically update any future new versions of NVDA to your computer, use your mouse or arrow keys to select the automatic update option, and select yes. This will insure your NVDA is automatically updated with the newest version available.**

### **Voice Settings:**

**The keyboard shortcut to this menu is NVDA + control + V (held down simultaneously).**

**Under this menu are:**

- 1. There are a variety of voices to choose from. There are the more robotic sounding voices and those with a clear, more human voice, such as American Anna, but everyone has their own favorites, with a tone and accent suited to your personal tastes.**
- 2. Click on Variant. This will allow you to further customize your voices. You may choose between a male or female voice, the more human voices, such as American Anna for example, are preset. There is even a frog option!**
- 3. Rate. This slider may be adjusted left or right to control the speed of your NVDA voice. Some enjoy fast speech and some like their speech a little slower.**
- 4. Pitch. This slider will allow you to adjust the pitch of your voice from high to low. 0, the furthest left on the slider, is the lowest pitch, while 100, the farthest right on the slider, is the highest.**
- 5. Volume. This slider allows you to select the volume of your NVDA voice to a level comfortable for your ears. If you find that NVDA is too loud or soft compared to other programs, use this slider to fine tune your volume without having to change your speaker volume.**

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**A text reader on your computer can open up a world of print to you, and make your tasks easier. This and the last issue of “Sightings” have offered information on but a few of these readers. Do a little research, find the one best suited to your needs, and give it a try.**

## **Your Input is Valuable To Me**

**Please give me your comments and suggestions, they are valuable, because the “Sightings” is your Newsletter.**

**We, the Board of WyCB would appreciate your thoughts, input and ideas. We desperately need to expand our Membership to include every town in Wyoming. No one should feel they are lost, alone and afraid. We want our brothers and sisters to know we’re here for them, and we want you to remember WyCB is a family, not a club or an organization, we need to connect with each other!**

**Sandy Behounek 307-234-6507 or email me at [sbehounek@bresnan.net](mailto:sbehounek@bresnan.net)**