

Issue 1
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AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS



A Message from AGAPE President Patrick Patton

Welcome to the AGAPE Council for the Blind Monthly Newsletter. This has been a great year. We have welcomed new members, had several successful events, and hosted our statewide convention. The MCB State Convention, held in St. Louis, was our greatest undertaking this year. After many meetings and months of planning, we were pleased with the turnout and the participation.

We are wrapping up the year with our first-ever newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide pertinent information and community updates regarding AGAPE members, events, tips & tricks, and other useful information for our members with visual impairments.

Each newsletter will feature a “Did You Know?” section to help readers navigate vision loss, a section dedicated to MCB news, membership updates, a monthly calendar, and a resource page.



I would like to acknowledge birthdays of our members, past and present, hoping everyone has a successful holiday and a safe, happy and prosperous new year!

Accessibility & Awareness...Did You Know?

Companies That Provide Live Assistance for Searching Products and Placing Orders

Accessibility Numbers:

Home Depot: (800)-466-3337

JC Penny: (800)-322-1189

Walmart: (800)-925-6278

Dollar General: (800)-463-1553

Target: (800)-440-0680

Amazon: (888)-280-4331

Dollar Tree: (877)-530-8733

Instacart: (844)-981-3433



Programs & Apps:

Be My Eyes is an app you can download to your iPhone, Android or smart device that provides 24/7 live support from volunteers to assist the visually impaired free of cost. Live volunteers will help you: identify objects, find items, identify your surroundings, guide you through unknown locations and complete simple tasks such as setting your thermostat, by accessing your camera on your smart device. Note, since these individuals are volunteers from around the world, it is not recommended to have them read personal or confidential information. A tutorial can be found on YouTube.

Voice Over: You can use your voiceover feature to read the screen on your phone. You can tap on the screen and have it read buttons, open apps and type. It will read email and text messages, documents and apps on your screen. Instructions for iPhone and Android are listed below.

Voice Over Instructions for iPhone:

1. Go to Settings



2. Click Accessibility

3. Turn the Voice Over setting on or off

How to Enable Android's TalkBack Screen Reader:

1. Open the Settings app on your device and choose Accessibility.

2. Select Screen Reader (this might appear as TalkBack on your device), then toggle on Voice Assistant (this might appear as Use TalkBack).

3. To turn this setting off, double-tap the Voice Assistant (or Use TalkBack) toggle, and then double-tap the OK button to confirm.

Click **HERE** for more information and instructions on enabling TalkBack on your Android device.

TAP Program: TAP stands for Telecommunications Access Program. An entity that provides adaptive technology equipment free of charge or at a discounted price for visually impaired people. Eligibility is based on income, check to see if you qualify by calling (816)-655-6700



MCB News

Stay Informed on What is Happening Statewide with Missouri Council of the Blind

1. MCB is forming a transportation committee to address and find solutions to transportation challenges for the blind in Missouri. This committee will be led by Robyn Wallen, who will chair the committee. We will keep you updated on the progress of this committee. AGAPE is also creating a transportation committee to address members' needs in the St. Louis area. We will keep you informed of what is available St. Louis residents.
2. To join MCB chat line, contact the MCB office at (314)-832-7272. This a good way to stay informed of MCB news.
3. The American Council of the Blind (ACB) is accepting applications for scholarship from November 1st, 2022 thru February, 14 2023. ACB in partnership with other organizations and individuals offer education scholarships ranging from \$2,000 to \$7,500 for entering freshman, undergraduate and graduate students, and those attending technical college. More information and the application form can be found at www.acb.org/scholarships.



Membership Updates

Stay Up-to-Date on Community News

We welcomed new members in 2022: Carla Greene, Jenetra Perry, Courtney Tramble, Troy Cleveland, Owen Neal, Mike Israel, Tracy Anderson and our newest member, Tarika Walton. Sadly, we also lost a member, Owen Neal, due to illness. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Featured AGAPE Member



Featured AGAPE's member of the month is **Wilma Chestnut**, who has been a member since 1995. Wilma is the definition of strength and perseverance. Since losing her sight at age 16, Wilma, has gone on to achieve many accolades.

A Few Words from Wilma:

“First, I would like to say that I am honored to be selected as the member of the month.

When we first elected officers, I was elected as Vice President, then secretary. Twelve years later I ran for



President and was elected. Additionally, when we decided to facilitate more activities, I became the Activity Coordinator. This is the position I have most enjoyed!

My greatest achievement in life is being a mom to my daughter. Other than that, I wanted to be a physical education teacher when I was young, but losing my sight, altered that goal. Yet, at age 32, I was able to participate in sports.

Retiring with gold medals and a power lifting record remaining unmatched since 1990 led to me starting a sports camp for blind and visually impaired children.

My all-time favorite responsibility is planning programs and activities for our organization. I especially enjoyed our Black History program, “Welcome to the Cotton Club”.

Finally, if you lost your sight, don't let it beat you! Accept it as a challenge concluding with you winning the battle. Whatever plan you had when you had sight, think about it, there are other ways of doing what you had in mind. This is where the word “adaptive” comes in. Make some adaptive changes for school, the workplace, motherhood, and anything else you want to do. Also surround yourself with like-minded people. We all need uplifting.”

Peer-to-Peer Discussion Group

Peer-to-Peer Discussion group will start January 10th, 2023. The purpose of this group is to offer support, to share information & to promote healthy living. Guest speakers will be invited once a month to speak on overcoming visually



impaired challenges and obstacles. They will also address technology and wellness. Members wishing to join the peer group should contact Carla at Greenecarla@att.net.

Wellness Corner

This Section will Provide Information to Improve Mind, Body, Soul and Quality of Life

The Power of Positive Thinking: How Thoughts Can Change Your Life (Part One)

By: Brian Tracy

The Power of Positive Thinking

Optimists seek the valuable lesson in every setback or reversal. Rather than getting upset and blaming someone else for what has happened, they take control of their emotions by saying, “What can I learn from this experience?”

Resolve today to learn how to develop positive thinking and a positive attitude toward yourself, the people around you and your life.



Calendar of Events

December Events & Activities

Friday, December 2nd - Sunday, December 4th – Heath Expo

Saturday, December 3rd – AGAPE Meeting and End-of Year Celebration, 10:30am at School for the Blind

Friday, December 9th – Holiday Party at Society for the Blind from 11:00am-2:00pm. Bring a \$5 donation and a canned good

On-Going Activities

Every Tuesday & Thursday – Prayer Line from 8:30am-9:00am on AGAPE Conference Line

Every Tuesday - \$2 Tuesday Bowling at Olivette Lanes from 12:00pm-3:00pm (Effective January 1, 2023)

Every Thursday – Chair Exercises with Ms. Wilma,
Conference Line: (517)-525-1531, Access Code: #5620518.
No classes on December 22nd and December 29th.



Upcoming Events

Saturday, January 7th – AGAPE Meeting; 10:30am at MCB Office

Saturday, January 7th – Lion's Club at 1:00pm

Saturday, February 25th – Black History Program: Bloody Sunday at 2pm; Location to be determined

Resources

Additional Information of Helpful Resources

Missouri Council of the Blind:

5453 Chippewa
St Louis, MO 63109
(314)-832-7172

Missouri School for the Blind:

3815 Magnolia Ave
St Louis, MO 63110
(314)-776-4320

Hadley: (800)-423-4238



Gateway for the Blind: 636-364-3064

Mind's Eye: (618)-394-6444

Society for the Blind: (314)-968-9000

Service Club for the Blind: (314)-833-3552

Lighthouse for the Blind: (314)-923-4338

Rehabilitation Services for the Blind: (314)-933-7371

Urban League: (314)-625-3640

United Way: 211

Blind Pension: (573)-571-6963