



**Issue 2**  
**February 2023**

AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS

## A Message from President Patrick Patton



Greetings AGAPE and welcome to 2023!

We are extremely pleased to kick off the new year with some exciting events and activities. We have been very busy working towards improving the experience of all of AGAPE. Last year, we launched our very first newsletter. We would like to thank the communications team for coming together to bring us information to improve the quality of our lives as visually impaired Individuals. We also would like to ask any members who are interested in participating and contributing articles for the newsletter to contact us with those articles. In January, we began our peer support group, and it was a success. We had a guest speaker, Shelley Byndom, Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Therapist, talk to us about how to manage stress.

This month we will have our Black History Program. Please see more information on the events page. We are currently working towards getting our website up and running and looking to have it ready to publish by the end of February. We have had several meetings to discuss the website design. If you have or would like to join a website committee meeting, please do so, the meetings are open. We hope that you enjoy the newsletter and please don't forget to call in or join our next meeting Saturday, March 4, 2023 at 11 AM. This meeting will be held at the Missouri Council of the Blind (MCB) office.

## Accessibility & Awareness Did You Know...?

### Seeing AI

Seeing AI is a free app that narrates the world around you. Designed for the blind and low vision community, this ongoing research project harnesses the power of AI to open up the visual world and describe nearby people, text and objects.

Optimized for use with VoiceOver, the app enables you to recognize:

- Short Text: Speaks text as soon as it appears in front of the camera.
- Documents: Provides audio guidance to capture a printed page, and recognizes the text, along with its original formatting.
- Products: Scans barcodes, using audio beeps to guide you; hear the name, and package information when available. (works with iPhone 6 and later)
- People: Saves people's faces so you can recognize them, and get an estimate of their age, gender, and emotions.
- Scenes: Hear an overall description of the scene captured.



**Issue 2**  
**February 2023**

# AGAPE

## NEWS

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

- Currency: Recognizes paper money. (Requires iOS 11)
- Color: Identifies color.
- Handwriting: Reads handwritten text like in greeting cards
- Light: Generates an audible tone corresponding to the brightness in the surroundings.
- Images in other apps: Just tap “Share” and “Recognize with Seeing AI” to describe images from Mail, Photos, Twitter, and more.
- Photo browsing experience: Describes photos on your phone

### COVID-19 At-Home Tests

The American Council of the Blind (ACB) has information regarding accessible Covid test kits. Now, people who are blind and low vision may order more accessible COVID-19 at-home tests. When connected to a smartphone application, these tests are capable of providing audible testing instructions and results to make the COVID-19 testing process more private and independent for people who are blind and low vision. To receive the more accessible COVID-19 at-home tests from the federal government, consumers may [click here to order online](#) or call 1-800-232-0233. Each order will include two rapid-antigen tests that are more accessible for people who are blind or low vision. Orders will ship free, while supplies last. For additional information regarding this more accessible at-home testing option, including additional resources from the Department of Health and Human Services, please visit: <https://acb.org/accessible-COVID-tests>.

If these more accessible tests will not meet your at-home testing needs, please contact the Disability Information and Access Line of the Administration on Community Living for additional COVID-19 testing resources: 1-888-677-1199.

### Menus4All

Menus4All is an app that boasts a selection of over 500,000 restaurants for which it offers menus accessible to the blind. The app is free to download, however a subscription is required to access service at a monthly rate of \$2.99 or annual rate of \$29.99.

### MCB & ACB News

#### State & National Happenings

To join the MCB email list, contact the MCB office at (314)-832-7272. This is a good way to stay informed of MCB news.



**Issue 2**  
**February 2023**

AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS

## MCB Dates to Remember

**March 21:**

Legislative Day

**June 5-11**

June Camp

**June 30 – July 7**

ACB Convention will be held in Schaumburg, IL this year. The room rate for the hotel is \$98 plus \$20 per additional person. Room tax is currently 15%. For phone reservations, call (800)-468-3571.

**July 31 – August 7**

July Camp

**August 24 – 27**

Extended Weekend Camp

**October 6-8**

The 67<sup>th</sup> MCB Annual Convention will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton located at 2431 N. Glenstone Avenue in Springfield, IL. Reserve your room by calling (417) 831-3131 before September 4<sup>th</sup> to get your room for \$100 per night. If you know someone that has never attended an MCB convention but would like to, inquire about the First-Time Application and Guidelines. Four people will be chosen to attend the convention with all expenses paid by MCB.

**October 15**

White Cane Walk

## MCB Sports & Recreation Program

MCB has started a new Sports & Recreation Program dedicated to fun and exciting activities and events. Board games, bingo, cards, dominos, rowing, bowling, horseback riding, kickboxing, walking, running, and so much more. This group is chaired by Wilma Chestnut-House. For more information, contact Wilma at [wilmachouse@gmail.com](mailto:wilmachouse@gmail.com) or subscribe to the email list by sending a blank email to [mcbSportsandRecreation+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:mcbSportsandRecreation+subscribe@groups.io) to be added to the group.

## Power Up Assistive Technology Conference

Power Up 2023 from Missouri Assistive Technology is accepting scholarships to attend the Power Up Assistive Technology Conference occurring on April 3 & 4 2023 in Columbia, Missouri. Individuals with a disability and families with an individual with a disability are encouraged to apply now until February 20 2023. Applications can be sent by mail to Missouri Assistive Technology, 1501 NW Jefferson St., Blue Springs, MO, 64015, by email at [Adminassist@mo-at.org](mailto:Adminassist@mo-at.org), and by fax to 816-655-6710.

## MCB Education & Advocacy Meeting

MCB would like to introduce bills in Jefferson City and will be paying the way to the capital of those who are interested in helping with the bills. To have expenses paid and learn more about the bills, you must be at the Zoom meeting on February 9 at 7 PM. You can join the meeting by app or computer or dial-in by phone.



**Issue 2**  
**February 2023**

AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS

## SSA & ABLER Webinar

Individuals with disabilities who are receiving SSI and/or SSDI as well as their family and friends are invited to attend a webinar on Wednesday, February 22nd at noon to hear from ABLER state program administrators and Social Security Administration (SSA) experts. During this inaugural webinar of the ABLER Savings Plans Network (ASPN), participants will gain knowledge about ABLER accounts and how they relate to Social Security Administration benefits. Webinar registration is free. [Register for the SSA & ABLER webinar](#) today. For more information on ABLER Today, go to <https://www.abletoday.org>. Note: This webinar is on the Zoom platform.

## Spoken Rx (Pharmacy) Tutorials

Hadley has launched a new series of tutorial workshops on prescription management. The video workshops demonstrate the benefits of Spoken Rx, a proprietary audio prescription label solution available for free on the CVS Pharmacy app, which allows patients to have their prescription information read aloud in English or Spanish. Learn more visiting [Hadley.edu/CVS](http://Hadley.edu/CVS).

## Royal Caribbean Cruise

Royal Caribbean's Voyager of the Seas is departing from Galveston, Texas to Cozumel, Mexico and back for a four-night trip from January 18-21 of next year, 2024. If you've never cruised before, this is a great trip to try. After your initial deposit, you will have until the end of October 2023 to make your final payment. If you are at least 75% interested in going, just send an email to Debbie Sanders at [blindcruising@gmail.com](mailto:blindcruising@gmail.com). Questions about payment deadline should be directed to Debbie.

## Membership Updates

### Stay Up-to-Date on Community News

This month, we welcomed Etefia Umana, Danny Lawrence, Jenny Cleveland, and Lisa Harper as our newest members. Each of you ignites new love and opportunity in AGAPE. We also wish a truly happy birthday to all our members with a birthday this month. **May your anniversary of life be full of light and bring you the beginning of new gifts toward your next birthday.**

## Featured AGAPE Member of the Month



**Issue 2**  
**February 2023**

AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS



Welcome Marilyn Parker as this month's featured member. She has been a member of AGAPE since 1996. Though she has not held any offices within the organization, she remains a dedicated and diligent member valued for her insight and opinions on multiple committees, and she was elected, at the start of 2023, to chair the Grants Committee. Congratulations, Marilyn, and thank you, so much, to Marilyn, for being the second featured member of the AGAPE newsletter. Every member matters when we're building a community of support, kindness, and love while working toward advocacy, perseverance, and education of and for those living with sight impairment!

### A Few Words from Marilyn

I value family and connection. I am most proud of my family relationships and of having the opportunity to have been in my right mind and with my parents to the very end! I am also proud to see AGAPE continue moving forward, even when it seems to sometimes be missing things it needs. AGAPE members are willing to help one another and other visually impaired people in their communities in spite of what they encounter. They give hope! One thing about life, everyone is dealing with something and if you have hope...you will make it. Hope will not allow you to stop trying or living. You must have hope! Hope is not tangible. My mom taught me it is the soul that sees. I repeat, have Hope!

## Wellness Corner

### Improve Mind, Body, Spirit, and Quality of Life

## Inflammation

Written by WebMD Editorial Contributors

### What Is Inflammation?

Inflammation is a process by which your body's white blood cells and the things they make protect you from infection from outside invaders, such as bacteria and viruses.

But in some diseases, like arthritis, your body's defense system -- your immune system -- triggers inflammation when there are no invaders to fight off. In these autoimmune diseases, your immune system acts as if regular tissues are infected or somehow unusual, causing damage.

### Inflammation Types

Inflammation can be either short-lived (acute) or long-lasting (chronic). Acute inflammation goes away within hours or days. Chronic inflammation can last months or years, even after the first trigger is gone. Conditions linked to chronic inflammation include:

Cancer

Heart disease

Diabetes



**Issue 2**  
**February 2023**

AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS

### Asthma

Alzheimer's disease

### Anti-Inflammatory Diet

The things you eat and drink can also play a role in inflammation. For an anti-inflammatory diet, include foods like:

- Tomatoes
- Olive oil
- Leafy green vegetables (spinach, collards)
- Nuts (almonds, walnuts)
- Fatty fish (salmon, tuna, sardines)
- Fruits (berries, oranges)

However, these things can trigger inflammation, so avoid them as much as you can:

- Refined carbohydrates (white bread)
- Fried foods (French fries)
- Sugary drinks (soda)
- Red and processed meats (beef, hot dogs)
- Margarine, shortening, and lard

The full article can be read at: <https://www.webmd.com/arthritis/about-inflammation>

## The Power of Positive Thinking (Part 2)

### How Thoughts Can Change Your Life

#### By Brian Tracy

Can you guess what the most successful and happy people think about all day long? The answer is quite simple... Healthy, happy people think about what they want, and how to get it, most of the time. In this way developing a positive attitude can truly change your entire life.

When you think and talk about what you want and how to get it, you feel happier and in greater control of your life. When you think about something that makes you happy, your brain actually releases endorphins, which give you a generalized feeling of well-being. As a result, you develop a positive attitude.



**Issue 2**  
**February 2023**

AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS

## How Do You Train Your Mind to Think Positive?

Training your mind to think positive can be achieved by leveraging a simple concept. Your mind has enough bandwidth to focus on only one thought at a time. All you have to do is keep it focused on uplifting thoughts until you form the same types of neural pathways that are created when you establish a new habit.

When a negative event occurs, remember that it's your response that truly determines the outcome. Always look for the positive response or optimistic lesson when such events take place.

## Entertainment Spotlight Books, Movies, TV, & Podcasts

### The Umbrella Academy

Created for Netflix by Steve Blackman and developed by Jeremy Slater, it revolves around a dysfunctional family of adopted sibling superheroes who reunite to solve the mystery of their father's death and the threat of an imminent apocalypse. The movie is based on the Dark Horse comic series of the same name by "My Chemical Romance" front man, Gerard Way and artist Gabriel Bá.

### Writing Works Wonders

More than just a podcast, Writing Works Wonders is a community of readers, writers, and literature enthusiasts of all types and genres who come together every Friday at noon to talk about the topic of the week, which might include writing tips, round-robin scenarios, or guest author interviews. To join the ACB Community Event, subscribe to the daily schedule by emailing [community@acb.org](mailto:community@acb.org) to tell them that you would like to be subscribed. The podcast is available on all major podcast and music platforms, and you can visit the website where you can find more information and weekly writing prompts at <https://writingworkswonders.com/>

### Young Wizards Series

This middle-grade series of ten novels by Diane Duane is a fantastic fantasy read for children and adults alike. Following Nita Callahan, her younger sister, Doreen, and Nita's best friend Kit Rodriguez as they discover magic and all the adventure that comes with battling against The Lone One, readers will be inspired to think about the physical universe, time and space, and the place death and entropy occupy within the concept of life and afterlife. The series is available from the National Library Service through BARD.

### Where the Crawdads Sing

For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So, in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya



**Issue 2**  
**February 2023**

AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS

Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life—until the unthinkable happens. This book by Delia Owens is available from the National Library Service through BARD.

## Raya & the Last Dragon

This Disney+ movie travels to the fantasy world of Kumandra, where humans and dragons lived together in harmony long ago. But when an evil force threatened the land, the dragons sacrificed themselves to save humanity. Now, 500 years later, that same evil has returned and it's up to a lone warrior, Raya, to track down the legendary last dragon to restore the fractured land and its divided people. However, along her journey, she'll learn that it'll take more than a dragon to save the world—it's going to take trust and teamwork as well.

If you'd like us to feature your favorite avenues of entertainment in the newsletter, send your recommendations to Tracy at [tracyam30@gmail.com](mailto:tracyam30@gmail.com).

## Calendar of Events Activities for the Month

### Thursday, February 9

7 PM: Education & Advocacy Jefferson City Legislation Trip Meeting via Zoom. Info and links above, in the MCB News section.

### Saturday, February 11

12 PM: Game-Day with Checkers, Dominos, and Cards at Missouri Council of the Blind (MCB)

### Tuesday, February 14

1 to 4 PM: \$5 Valentine's Day Meal and Trivia with Wilma at Missouri Council of the Blind (MCB). Must RSVP by contacting Wilma.

### Saturday, February 25

2 to 5 PM: AGAPE's Black History Month Program at the Overland Lions Club Banquet Hall

### Saturday, March 4

11 AM: AGAPE Meeting at MCB

## On-Going Activities We Keep It Moving

### Every Tuesday & Thursday

8:30 AM to 9 AM: Prayer Request Line on AGAPE Conference Line





**Issue 2**  
**February 2023**

AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS

**Every Tuesday**

10 AM to 11AM: Ladies Kickboxing at Kick House  
Noon to 3 PM: \$2 Tuesday Bowling at Olivette Lanes

**Every 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday**

10 to 11 AM: Peer Support Group on AGAPE Conference Line  
Every Thursday  
Chair Exercises with Wilma, Conference Line 2

**Upcoming Events**  
**A Look to the Future**

**Saturday, March 25**

2PM: Karaoke & Chili Meal at Saint Louis Society for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SLSBVI).  
Volunteers set up at 11 AM. Contact Wilma Chestnut-House for information on what you can donate.

**Resources**  
**Need-to-Know Info**

For an up-to-date list of all resources, contact a member of The Communications Team.

AGAPE Conference Line  
605-313-4818  
Access Code: 367629

Conference Line 2  
(517)-525-1531  
Access Code: #5620518

**Missouri Council of the Blind (MCB)**

To give every blind Missourian an opportunity to contribute socially and economically to society with the same expectations for success as all other Missourians.

<https://www.moblind.org/>

5453 Chippewa St, St. Louis, MO 63109  
314-832-7172



**Issue 2**  
**February 2023**

AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS

**Saint Louis Society for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

SLSBVI provides a variety of services and programs, and holds space for others to offer services and programs, to help people with sight impairment to have full lives.

<https://slsbvi.org>

8770 Manchester Rd, St. Louis, MO 63144

314-968-9000

**Olivette Lanes**

Down-to-earth bowling alley with bumper lanes, night bowling & a full bar & grill.

<https://olivettelanes.com/>

9520 Olive Blvd, Olivette, MO 63132

(314) 991-0365

**Kick House**

A modern kickboxing studio for everyone.

<https://thekickhouse.com/>

10483 Old Olive Street Rd, Creve Coeur, MO 63141

(314) 390-1060

**Overland Lions Club Hall Rentals**

Part of the Lions Club

2358 Lackland Rd, Overland, MO 63114

(314) 429-2870