



AGAPE

A Gateway to Advocacy, Perseverance and Education

NEWS

A Message

From President Patrick Patton



Greetings, AGAPE family!

Welcome to our May newsletter. We are happy to celebrate all of the mothers this month, so please join me in wishing them a Happy Mother's Day! Never miss an opportunity to thank your mother, if you can. and remember those that have been there for us. We are looking forward to a good summer with our AGAPE family. Take advantage of some summer activities happening in the next couple of months.

Last month, in April, we had a wonderful fellowship day after our monthly meeting. We enjoyed food, conversation, and music! We also had a couple of visitors, whom we would like to thank for attending. We would also like to thank everyone who was able to attend in-person.

Our peer support group, which meets twice a month every second and fourth Wednesdays at 10 AM, offers valuable information and a variety of topics for our members who are dealing with vision impairment as well as for our members who are sighted. We hope you can join the next meeting. We featured one of our members as a guest speaker at the peer support group.

We also hosted a town hall meeting with Metro Bi-State Development regarding changes in Call-A-Ride transportation. Also, make a note that we are still meeting every Tuesday and Thursday at 8:30am on the AGAPE Conference Line to offer prayer and support.

We also began a 21-day challenge in April that demonstrate 6 key factors to improve your overall health. The challenge is a guide towards making healthy changes in your life. It focuses on nutritional changes, increased exercise, drinking plenty of water, regulating your gut health, improving your mental health, and encouraging a good night's sleep. We hope everyone is able to continue these healthy practices. More detailed information was in the April newsletter.

We would like to acknowledge our May birthdays. Please join us at our next meeting, which will be Saturday, May 6 at 11 AM and located at the Missouri Council of the Blind building on Chippewa.

Accessibility & Awareness

Did You Know...?

Be My Eyes Update

There are new updates coming to the Be My Eyes App that includes using artificial intelligence instead of live volunteers. The purpose of this update is to provide users with a more independent and private experience.



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Please visit this link to hear more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/nightly-news/video/new-ai-tool-describes-surroundings-to-visually-impaired-people-171207237511>

ScriptTalk

If you or a loved one has trouble reading prescription medication labels then ScripTalk is the solution for you. This is a FREE, easy-to-use service available at thousands of pharmacies throughout the United States and Canada that will read all your medication information out loud.

A pharmacist programs a small electronic label with all your prescription information, including drug name, dosage, instructions, warnings, pharmacy information, doctor name, prescription number, date and more. The pharmacist places the tag on your prescription medication and you can use a free mobile ScripTalk App to hear all the information read out loud. Simply download the App from the App Store or Google Play, click the “scan” button and hold the bottle up to either the front of the screen on iPhones or back of the phone case near the camera for Androids.

Alternatively, the patient can use a ScripTalk Station, which is about the size of an old, portable CD player or phone message machine. Simply place the pill bottle on the machine and press the “Read” button. The two triangle buttons on either side of the oval read button can be used to jump forward or back through the prescription information. There is small wheel on the right side of the machine which can be moved to turn the machine on and turn up the volume.

MCB & ACB News State & National Happenings

MCB Board Meeting

At the board meeting held in Springfield on Saturday, April 22, 2023, there was a motion made and seconded to allow all MCB members to attend and participate in the board meeting via Zoom or teleconference.

The members will be allowed to speak for two (2) minutes and they must stay on the subject at hand. The members are still unable to vote, but they will have a voice.

This change is for a trial period for the May and June board meetings in order to see how it works out. If it works out, the by-laws will be changed to reflect the full acceptance of the new motion.

The matter of hiring Bill Reeder, a fundraiser consultant, was not voted on. More information was requested by the board. The matter will be tabled until the next board meeting.

Several by-laws have been requested to be removed, changed, or reworded. The Strategic Planning Committee will be working alongside the affiliate representatives for their respective by-laws.



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White Cane Safety Day

White Cane Safety Day is officially on Sunday, October 15. However, MCB is hosting a fundraiser walk this year on Saturday, October 14. The walk will be held at a park in Jefferson City because the city is centrally located within the state. Information about the park, time, and activities will be sent closer to the event date.

I encourage you all to participate in this first big fundraiser for MCB. To prepare for the event, start walking at least two days a week for a period of twenty minutes each. Add ten minutes each week. By October 14, we should all be able to complete a distance of 5K, which is 3.1 miles, or 10K, which is 6.2 miles. For those who cannot walk great distances, we have devised a relay.

This event is for walkers with canes and guide dogs, bikes, runners, skaters, and wheelchairs. The registration fee is \$15 per person. Sponsor sheets will be provided. More information will be available on May 16. If you miss the information, please contact Wilma Chestnut-House.

Trip Denial Reporting

As a reminder, passengers of Call-A-Ride can report trip denials using the complaint form previously mentioned from the Transportation page on MCB's website. It is considered a trip denial if the times offered are outside of a window one hour before or after your requested time, even if you take the trip. So, if you request a 9:30 a.m. trip and they offer you either an 8:00 a.m. or an 11:45 a.m. that is still a denial. If they offer you a trip home at 1:00 p.m. that is also still considered a denial, even if you take the trip. If they offer you a one-way trip that is a denial. So please fill out those forms. Forms can be found on the MCB website.

Letters to the Editor

We are still working toward better service with Metro Bi-State Development in St. Louis and need your help. Please send your letters to the email addresses below. Public opinion is key in making changes. Please keep your letters concise and under 250 words. If you would like help to send and submit letters, Robyn Wallen will be happy to type them and email them for you. In your letter, you must provide your name, address, and contact information. State that your letter is for publication.

You can email letters to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch at letters@post-dispatch.com. This is a daily paper that publishes one letter per writer every two to three months, so we need about sixty to ninety writers.

You can email letters to the St. Louis American through their submission form at stlamerican.com. This is a Black weekly paper whose print edition comes out on Thursdays. Submission deadline is every Tuesday morning.

You can email letters to The St. Louis Argus at st.louis.argus@gmail.com. This is also a Black weekly paper.

You can email letters to the Webster-Kirkwood Times at newsroom@timesnewspapers.com.

We appreciate your help, and together we can make Metro Bi-State Development listen to our concerns. If you have any further questions please reach out to Robyn Wallen, MBC Transportation Committee Chair, email: robynwallen@gmail.com.



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Membership Updates

Stay Up-to-Date on Community News

Let's all give a warm happy birthday to our May members, Karen Hawkins and Courtney Tramble. Also, let's congratulate member Danny Lawrence on his graduation from Washington University and his nomination for the prestigious John B. Ervin award. A wonderful Mother's Day to all our members who are or will be mothers. If you would like to have your announcement added to the newsletter, please contact the president of AGAPE.

Featured AGAPE Member of the Month

Welcome Courtney Tramble as this month's featured member. She has been a member of AGAPE since 2022.

A Few Words from

Outside of being an active member, I will also be the committee person over the bylaws. My number one biggest accomplishment of life, thus far, is being a mother to my beautiful, charismatic, eager, and intelligent eight-year-old daughter. She is the absolute apple of my eye and one of my main most important reasons to keep going in a positive and encouraging direction.

I'd also say another accomplishment of mine is being a survivor; pressing forward, and being resilient, brave, courageous, and confident in this journey of life that I'm on. So far, I'm proud, grateful, and even encouraged by becoming part of a group of individuals who have been faced with adversity in some of the same yet different challenges and learning that, although this life-altering thing has taken place, it doesn't define you. Neither does it stop you from performing at your highest potential. I'm really looking forward to learning even more.

I'd say to anyone looking for an organization to help in aiding them throughout this journey: life has only just begun. You may think that your world is over or you can't do certain things because you now have no or low vision. However, I say life has just begun. You are truly now starting to SEE what really matters and what's most important, but it's up to you to turn it into what God really has for you to see and understand.

There is absolutely nothing in this world you can't do! Be the change you want to see in the world! God chose you. You may not understand it now but when you really let go of what you thought you knew then and only then can you take a hold of and begin to understand what is necessary to be "seen." Let nothing or no one tell you differently. God chose you to be different because of the assignment in your life. There is nothing wrong with being peculiar. It just sets you apart from others.



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If it had not been for me being introduced to Ms. Wilma and her accepting to be a mentor to me, I can't say I'd be where I am today in this. So, I have to acknowledge her and give her flowers for not only introducing me to this group but also for helping me to be bold and courageous and resilient!

Wellness Corner

Improve Mind, Body, Spirit and Quality of Life

Yoga offers physical and mental health benefits for people of all ages. Regardless of your level of yoga expertise, if you're practicing regularly, you can feel better from head to toe.

8 Benefits of Yoga

1. Yoga improves strength, balance, and flexibility.
2. Yoga helps with back pain relief.
3. Yoga can ease arthritis symptoms
4. Yoga benefits heart health
5. Yoga helps you relax and sleep better.
6. Yoga increases your energy and brightens your mood.
7. Yoga is good for stress management.
8. Yoga promotes self-care.

To read the full article, please visit the [9 Benefits of Yoga webpage](#).

Click the following link for a YouTube video of Yoga for the Blind: <https://youtu.be/wNZJX1M28sY>

Entertainment Spotlight

Books, Movies, TV, & Podcasts

This month, we have some recommendations from President Patrick Patton and a quick entry from Tarika Walton. Enjoy!

I enjoy watching television while reclining on my couch. A few of my favorite shows are: The Cosby Show, Blackish, Star Trek: Deep Space Nine. Although most of these shows do not have audio description, I enjoy listening to the dialog. I also enjoy listening to audio described movies. My taste in movies is diverse. I love listening to the "Book of Eli", listening to the dialog in the "Hateful Eight", or listening to Joe Pesci in "Casino," and Good Fellas. I also enjoy binge watching the Lord of the Rings trilogy, "The Godfather (Part I and II)" or any Star Wars, Harry Potter, or Marvel movie.



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My favorite audio descriptive program is "Game of Thrones" season eight episode three, The Long Night. People complain the episode is so dark they cannot see what is happening. I have advised several people to try using audio description and rewatch the episode. This gives them an opportunity to view a program as someone visually impaired. In follow-up conversations, a few of them have said how helpful it was and they would access it again. Others appreciated experiencing how blind and visually impaired people watch shows.

I am extremely grateful that I can access and study the Bible independently. Using Bible apps on my phone allows me to read and study the Bible. I utilize You Version Bible app on Google, and attend church and bible study consistently to gain a deeper understanding of God's word. It is my faith in God that keeps me grounded. When things are spinning out of control and the world is upside down, I hold on to God's word and promises and know, "That all things work for the good of those who believe."

Our proofer, Tarika Walton, recommends checking out TV shows and movies from the website AudioVault.net. It is free, and legal. All you have to do is create an account, and you will be able to make 25 downloads per day of audio described material.

Calendar of Events Activities for the Month

Saturday, May 6

11 AM | AGAPE Meeting at MCB

Saturday, May 13

10 AM | Mother's Day Tea Party at the Maryland Heights Recreation Center

Saturday, May 27

10 AM | Audio Description Guided Tour at the Missouri History Museum; The exhibit is called "Coloring STL". For more info visit: <https://mohistory.org/exhibits/coloring-stl>

Monday, May 29

Memorial Day; Federal Holiday

On-Going Activities We Keep It Moving

Every Tuesday & Thursday

8:30am-9 AM | Prayer Line from on AGAPE Conference Line



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Every Tuesday

Noon to 3 PM | \$2 Tuesday Bowling at Olivette Lanes

Every Thursday

10 AM | Chair Exercises with Wilma, Conference Line 2

Upcoming Events A Look to the Future

Thursday, June 15

Juneteenth Program at the Missouri History Museum; If you are interested, please contact Patrick via email, patrickpattonpp@gmail.com, as we need a count of individuals needing audio descriptive devices. Please respond by Saturday, May 8, 2023.

Friday, June 30 - Friday, July 7

ACB Convention in Schaumburg, IL

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



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314-832-7172

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

American Council of the Blind

The American Council of the Blind is a nationwide organization in the United States. It is an organization mainly made up of blind and visually impaired people who want to achieve independence and equality.

<https://www.acb.org>

225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 660

Alexandria, VA 22314

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Fax: 703-465-5085

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