



PERISCOPE

**A Quarterly Newsletter sponsored by the
Mississippi Council of the Blind, Inc.**

Winter 2024-2025

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MS Council of the Blind

P O Box 134

Clinton, MS 39060

Anyone wishing to remember the MS Council of the Blind in a last will and testament may do so by including a special paragraph for that purpose. If your wishes are complex, please contact MCB for clarification.

Contributions to the James Doyle Case Memorial Scholarship Fund or to the Carter Gable Memorial Technology Assistance Fund should be appropriately marked, and sent to the above address.

Phone MCB at 769-257-4515.

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A Note from the Editor

by Alison Smitherman

Greetings, MCB members and friends, and welcome to our final issue of the Periscope for 2024! We hope you enjoy reading about all that is going on in MCB as well as a few holiday goodies mentioned at the end.

I would like to thank all of you who either submitted articles or assisted with the formatting and distribution of the Periscope. Without your kind assistance, this newsletter would not have been possible.

The deadline for submitting articles for the Spring, 2025 issue of the Periscope is **February 21, 2025**. Please make a note of it.

I wish each of you and your families a Happy Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!

President's Message

by Jane Peets

As I write this, I am thinking about the circumstances of our members and friends. The holidays can be a joyous time for

some and a lonely time for others. Let's all be grateful for what we have and try to reach out to those in need.

The MCB board last met on 09/21/24 via Zoom.

A check for \$500 has been sent to this year's MSB valedictorian for the James Doyle Case award. No applications were submitted for the scholarship.

The Braille writer project continues. Two Brailers were given to two school children living in Flowood. Mrs. Sarah Laprade, beloved former teacher at MSB, has donated two Brailers to be refurbished and given to two more students.

The fall picnic was held at Leflore's Bluff State Park on 10/26, and 39 people attended. The auction raised \$716. I would like to thank Joe and Juanita bishop for helping with getting our Subway Sandwich order to the park and Wanda and Wayne Allen for providing soft drinks. Thanks, Juanita, for doing your auction magic. We had a beautiful day for the event, and I hope everyone enjoyed getting together. Pshon Barrett, Director of the Client Assistance Program, spoke to us about the CAP service. Jan Hawthorne gave an update about MSDB.

We will be having a one-day convention on 04/25/25 at the Trust Mark Park Holiday Inn in Pearl. If you have any

nominations for awards, please submit them to Margaret Smitherman, Chair of the awards committee, for consideration.

The next state board meeting is scheduled for 01/18/25 at 10:00 a.m. via the Zoom platform. Visitors are welcome. I would like to ask all board members and officers to note the date and make it a priority to attend.

May The good Lord bless and keep you and give you peace and joy, and let's all do our best to make 2025 a great year for MCB.

Mississippi Council Of The Blind

State Board Meeting Highlights

by Ralph Smitherman, Recording Secretary

The roll was called at 10:10 AM. A quorum was established. The meeting took place on Saturday, September 21, 2024, by zoom. Kenneth Reed opened the meeting with prayer!

The minutes and Treasurer's report were approved. Committee reports were given.

MCB 2025 State Convention:

President Peets reported that our one-day convention would be held on Saturday, April 26, 2025, at the Holiday Inn in Pearl, Mississippi.

Two Braille Writers:

Jane reported that the two Braille writers we have could be given to two children who need them. The Braille writers are in good working order.

Chapter Reports:

Both the North Mississippi chapter and the Jackson chapter gave their respective reports.

Technology:

Jane reported that she continues getting some technology items from Pat Austin.

2024 ACB Summer Convention:

Jane Peets stated that Mississippi had several people who attended the national convention.

Coalition For Citizens With Disabilities:

President Peets stated that the CCD was gearing up for the 2025 legislative session, and one priority is providing aides at home for deaf/blind individuals.

MDRS:

A meeting was held recently to find out what works and what does not work.

2024 ACB Holiday Auction:

We donated to the 2024 ACB Holiday auction.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, January 18, 2025, at 10 AM, central time, by zoom.

Big Announcement from Tupelo!

Brian LaPrade and Christina Torbert invite friends from the Council to a reception celebrating their marriage on March 15, 2025, at the Rockwell Center, 1199 Joyner Ave, Tupelo, MS. Party will be from 4 to 8 pm. RSVP by calling Brian at 662-422-9562.

Northeast Mississippi Chapter News

by Bobby Stanford

We had a board meeting and luncheon on Saturday, November 16, 2024

We have fulfilled technology grants for two blind individuals: A recording device, and a laptop computer with JAWS.

We are searching for a Blind child to fulfil our Blind child Christmas gift.

We sadly had a member, Ms. Eleanor Long, leave us to go be with her Lord.

We made a donation to the Pine Vale Children's Home.

Our member, Brian Laprade, and his fiancé Christine will be getting married this coming March, and we are looking forward to celebrating the event with them.

The MCBNM wants to wish each of you a very Merry Christmas!

Jackson Chapter Update

by Ken Maddox

Hello Everyone,

The Jackson Chapter is doing well. We are continuing our bi-monthly socials and board meetings. Our board just met to handle the business of the chapter. We have approximately \$15,462.77 in assets.

The next social for the chapter will be our Annual Christmas Party and Annual Meeting. It will be on Saturday, December 14, at 11 o'clock. Meat for the meal will be provided, and everyone is asked to bring side dishes and desserts. We will meet at the home of Wanda Allen, 107 Chalet Strasse, Brandon, MS 39042.

We will have our Sock Drive for the Homeless and an Auction/Bake Sale, so please bring items to sell to support our chapter. Hope to see y'all there.

Happy Holidays!

Ken Maddox
President, Jackson Chapter

The Monarch
Edited From APH

Imagine accessing materials by viewing one line of braille at a time. Now, picture interacting with them by intervals of ten lines

with the added bonus of displaying tactile graphics. A more robust option than the traditional braille display, the [Monarch](#) opens up a plethora of learning possibilities that are often unavailable for students who are blind or have low vision.

After unboxing the Monarch and pressing the power button on the bottom left side of the device, users will progress through the startup tutorial, which discusses the various buttons and functions of the Monarch. Then, the main menu appears with a list of apps that can be utilized in every class. The Braille Editor serves as a way to create BRFs and practice typing both contracted and uncontracted braille. Pressing the zoom in and out buttons adjusts the line spacing so young readers have an easier time deciphering their work.

By connecting via Wi-Fi to APH's [Tactile Graphics Image Library \(TGIL\)](#), the Tactile Viewer application grants users access to over 2,000 tactile graphics. Open a map for social studies class or pull up a diagram of the solar system for science. By operating the zoom in and out buttons, students can discover more distinct details of the image alongside their sighted peers.

Following the Tactile Viewer, KeyWord assists students as they compose and edit papers for English class or complete worksheets that a teacher provides to them on a flash drive. For the first time ever, educators can use Microsoft Word's equation

editor to create math content that translates directly to Nemeth or UEB math when read on the Monarch. Afterwards, students may finish their work, and it will show up in perfect print for the teacher.

With the help of KeyMath, a graphing calculator created in partnership with Desmos, students in higher level math classes can make instantaneous tactile graphs to solve problems.

“The graphing calculator on the Monarch was mind-blowing because the calculators that students attempt to use now have tones that indicate the slope of the graph,” said Krystal Guillory, an itinerant TVI from Ruston, Louisiana. “That means nothing without the braille graph in front of the student.” KeyMath is the first to demonstrate an accessible, electronic way of constructing graphs.

The last apps on the Monarch’s main menu are the File Manager for document organization and the Victor Reader, which gives students the ability to read and download titles from online libraries, like [Bookshare](#). Whether their books are for school or leisure, students will be able to read with both hands on a bigger surface area, just like they would with a physical book. Textbooks containing both braille and tactile graphics will soon be available on the Monarch as APH and its partners finish developing [eBraille](#). Students will no longer have to wait months

for the multitude of volumes of braille that make up one book and miss valuable learning opportunities due to lack of materials. Instead, with the push of a button, the book can appear digitally on the Monarch.

The Monarch is the future of education for all students. Read our [other Monarch blogs](#) to learn more about the device.

The Monarch will be publicly available in September, 2024, and eligible for purchase with Federal Quota funds.

A Recipe for the Holidays

Pumpkin Dump Cake

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups half-and-half
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 1/2 teaspoons nutmeg, plus more, optional, to taste, for garnish
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 (15-ounce) cans pure pumpkin

- 1 cup unsalted butter, melted, divided
- 1 (15.25-ounce) box yellow cake mix
- whipped cream, optional, to taste, for serving

Directions

Step 1 -Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Step 2 -Grease a 9x13-inch baking dish with cooking spray.

Step 3 -In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the half-and-half, the brown sugar, the eggs, 1 1/2 teaspoons of the nutmeg, the cinnamon, the ginger, and the vanilla until well-combined.

Step 4 -Add the pumpkin to the milk mixture, whisking to combine.

Step 5 -Whisk in 1/4 cup of the melted butter.

Step 6 -Evenly spread the pumpkin mixture into the prepared baking dish.

Step 7 -Sprinkle the cake mix evenly over the pumpkin mixture.

Step 8 -Drizzle the remaining melted butter over the cake mix, using a spoon to gently spread the butter around and allowing the butter to soak into the cake mix.

Step 9 -Bake until the top is browned and cooked through, about 1 hour.

Step 10 -Allow the cake to cool to room temperature.

Step 11 -Serve topped with the whipped cream and the extra nutmeg.

Christmas Gift Suggestions

To your enemy, forgiveness.

To an opponent, tolerance.

To a friend, your heart.

To a customer, service.

To all, charity.

To every child, a good example.

To yourself, respect.

Taken from Oran Arnold, 1900-1980, American writer and editor

HAPPY HOLIDAYS, EVERYONE!!!