**President Rose's Q2 Report**

Dear FDBA Family Members,

Hello Sunshine! Wow, summer is already here in the Sunshine State of Florida. A lot of people are getting so pumped up to start their journey, vacation, beach, camping, and many more! Please stay safe during this summer.

I am pleased to share my President's Q2 report with you all. As promised, I continue to communicate with FDBA members and the DeafBlind community:

* Better understanding the need of the DeafBlind individuals and continue to have social events for the DeafBlind community
* Emphasize the importance on improving the quality of life for people who are DeafBlind through advocacy, peer support, and community partnerships
* Increase resources, programs, and services for people who are DeafBlind
* Provide greater outreach to people who reside in Florida who are DeafBlind and grow more members by providing a welcoming and supportive environment for all who are DeafBlind and/or who wish to support the DeafBlind community
* Reestablish CN workshops and introduce ProTactile (PT) language into our world

Since Election, the Board and I have been very productive by spending a lot of time&mdash;6.5 weeks to be exact&mdash;on this project: reviewing and revising FDBA's Constitution and Bylaws. We thank you all for your support and approval for the final revision. We are so proud of our hard work. It shows the whole world that we, DeafBlind, are very capable of what we do. Way to go!

Please take your time to read Bylaws 🡪 <https://fldeafblind.org/doc/FDBACB.docx>

Last April, our Treasurer, Anna Slye, made a proposal to host DeafBlind Picnic Day. The Board and I approved her proposal. I am very excited to share the news that FDBA will host DeafBlind Picnic Day at Anastasia State Park in St. Augustine on Saturday, October 14, 2023 from 9 AM to 5 PM. For more information below:

**STOMP! STOMP! STOMP!**

FDBA is hosting a fun-filled outdoor event at Anastasia State Park. This park offers beach, biking, games, hiking, and kayaking. The details of food, drinks, and "Sea Turtle" pavilion will be forthcoming at a later date. We need volunteers to help out with the grilling, activities, auction bids, games, and many more. Please contact me if you are interested to help. Come and have fun with us. Please visit our Events page 🡪 <https://fldeafblind.org/events.html>

Would you like to make a donation or sponsor this much-needed outdoor event, future events, and special projects? If so, please visit our Donate page 🡪 <https://fldeafblind.org/donate.html>

Thank you for your contribution and your support means the world to the DeafBlind community.

The Board and I agreed that we wanted to see DeafBlind Floridians out and about and enjoy their quality of life despite not able to afford to enlist a CoNavigator (CN). We decided to terminate Florida CoNavigators (FCN) services with ASPIRE Interpreting last month by sending out a letter of termination to Keri Brooks at ASPIRE Interpreting and she accepted the termination contract.

Great news! I appointed Vicky Magliocchino as a new FCN Coordinator who will provide hands-on training. Vicky, Theresa, and I worked together on improving the FCN website. Please visit this page 🡪 <https://fldeafblind.org/news.html>

If you have a friend or family member who wants to learn how to become your personal CN. Please have them sign up by visiting this link 🡪 <https://fcn.fldeafblind.org>

FDBA is more than happy to provide hands-on training at no cost. You may wish to donate to show your appreciation of our program. You are welcome to make a contribution. It would mean a lot to DeafBlind individuals to gain their full independence and enjoy their quality of life. It is imperative for them to go out and about and feel less hurdles and limitations through the help of their personal CN. It is the DeafBlind individual's responsibility to work with their CN to make an agreement on compensation. FDBA is not responsible to provide CN services or pay CN compensation because the 501(c)3 policy will not allow it. But the <b>COOL</b> part is that you are able to enlist your personal CN of your choice to maintain your best quality of life. I am very happy for everyone. Mission Accomplished!

It has been quite challenging for us to search a perfect hotel to host our next State Meeting 2024 and 20th Anniversary Celebration. It took us a couple of months with the help of our research to find the best deal possible. I checked many hotels all over Florida and then I remembered the other day we as members voted for Fort Myers, but it didn't work out due to high cost for that month of February according to previous Board. So, I contacted Drury Inn and Suites in Fort Myers in hopes to score a deal at a lower rate. I was impressed that Drury's Sales Coordinator who was so patient with me for a couple of hours searching for the best rate. Bingo! I found the best deal for the weekend of May 16-19, 2024. I was so stoked to bring the proposal up to the Board and they approved in a heartbeat. That's wonderful news! Now, the Board and I will plan to make the most <b>fun and memorable</b> event you will treasure. Please be sure to save the date and spread the word to the DeafBlind community and CoNavigators you know to join us. Let's have a blast in Fort Myers, Florida. For more information, please visit this Events page 🡪 <https://fldeafblind.org/events.html>

If you are wondering about the social group on Facebook, I am still working on it and it is still under construction. Please bear with us as we revamp our Florida DeafBlind Association group. I very much appreciate your feedback about the Facebook group. It takes a village to work because most of us prefer Google Groups which is also an email-based version for easy access.

The Board and I had endless discussions about several events to host in the coming years. We agreed that it would be best for Breezin' PT Week or Weekend to take place in every 'even' year starting in Fall 2024 because DeafBlind Access of the South (DBAS) takes place in every 'odd' year.

It is in FDBA's best interest to host the State Meeting and field trip in May based on the lowest rate and the hurricane season doesn't start until June. It may be cheaper during the hurricane season even though it may bring unnecessary risks which we cannot afford to panic and change the plans.

I would like to add our Web Guru, Theresa Wells, to my report:

Theresa worked with me and past President to establish a history webpage to portray the lists of the past and present Board of Directors and logos dating back to 2004. It is not-to-miss to learn the history of our organization. Please visit this history page 🡪 <https://fldeafblind.org/history.html>

Theresa made an amazing promise that she would write the code to annex website apple touch icons to your favorite mobile browsers which she succeeded. She also designed two icons for Florida CoNavigators (FCN) and Sunshine Touch (ST). Since technology keeps advancing at a lightning pace, she is able to change out old navigation menu and annex a better and improved navigation menu that works well on all platforms, especially revolutionized smartphones.

Theresa is able to incorporate articles of Florida's Hurricane Preparedness and Emergency from the Sunshine Touch newsletter into a webpage. It is found on the main (Home) page. It will be added annually at the start of the hurricane season as a friendly reminder. It is not-to-miss because it contains several valuable pieces of information which is good for our DeafBlind community, especially the sales tax holidays in Florida. Be prepared and be safe.

Without Theresa, FDBA will never have a website! I am so inspired, grateful, and proud of her for her skills, work ethic, and amazing working relationship.

Overall, I really <b>LOVE</b> this new FDBA generation.

STOMP, STOMP, STOMP! Keep it going with my utmost love for FDBA!

And, I am so excited to share the news with you, my DB family . . . May 17th was my birthday and I started a birthday fundraising effort for the entire month of May in lieu of birthday gifts. So far, I have raised $535.00! Thank you all so much for your support.

The Board and I discussed about new membership incentives. We hope you will like these incentives. Effective January 1, 2024, FDBA membership dues will be increased and each level of membership will receive their incentives.

Our membership incentives consist of:

* VIP Membership
* Voting Privileges - General and In-Person Election
* Complimentary Vendor Booth/Table
* Field Trip
* PT Social
* Hotel Group Discount and Sales Tax Exemption

For complete list of the incentives, please visit this page 🡪 <https://fldeafblind.org/incentives.html>

Our Vice President, Kathryn Zarate, recommended Member-at-Large (MAL) Jesse Wall to take the Secretary seat and it took Jesse awhile to make his decision. The Board unanimously approved to vote Jesse to fill the vacancy of the Secretary seat by the majority vote of 6-0 and he eventually accepted the Secretary seat. Congratulations, Mr. Secretary! Thank you for your utmost support and love for FDBA community.

The hard part for the past three months is finally over&mdash;we will focus on the next three months with new goals. We are working on new fundraising projects and making the fun-filled and exciting plans for the DeafBlind Picnic Day! Stay tuned!

Please stay safe and enjoy your summer. I plan to enjoy my summer after all the hard work.

PT Cheers!

Warmest Regards,

Lara "Rose" Wall, President