Dear FDBA Members,

President Rose here.

Greetings to you during this joyous time of year! May you experience the spread of laughter, the warmth of love, and the joy of gratitude this season and beyond. We, the board, wish you a happy holiday! We hope you enjoy this time with your loved ones and have a wonderful winter season.

During the first week of last October, I had a very rich, rewarding and amazing experience with DeafBlind Access of the South (DBAS) Retreat at Camp Twin Lakes in Rutledge, Georgia. I really enjoyed socializing and meeting many old friends and making many new friends there. We had a lot of fun activities such as paddle Boats/Canoeing, Arts & Crafts, Zipline, Games, ProTractile Workshop, Autumn party & Hawaiian party, Educational Workshops, Field Trips, Hiking/Walking trails, and so much more. Guess what? There was the largest group of FDBA Members and CoNavigators were attending there. I am so PROUD. I would definitely love to go back there again next 2025.

I am so excited to share with you that we, DeafBlind, had an opportunity to get together on Friday, October 13th in St. Augustine to support our DeafBlind Artists for the Tactile Art Show. Thank you, David Ennis, Winfield Sainpreux, Tracie Inman & Lara “Rose” Wall for participating and all of your artworks are beautiful. It was so amazing to watch each of FDBA Members and Board Members’  happy faces touching all of unique artwork – We really enjoyed it very much! Congratulations to these winners, Winfield & David! Let’s plan on doing it again next year.  I hope for more new DeafBlind Artists to participate and make it a whole DeafBlind Artwork Gallery next year. Come and join us! Thank you all for coming to support DeafBlind Artists. You are all my inspirations because your artwork defines who you are.  Thank you again for coming to support us! Greatly appreciated!

The next day, Saturday October 14th, DeafBlind Picnic Day was an amazing day at Anastasia State Park!! It was just beautiful weather and there was approximately 50+ DB, CoNavigators and Supporters who showed up to have a wonderful time together. It was such a joy to see many happy faces!

I am pleased to report fundraising was successful for FDBA. We have raised $619.00, and I was so proud of our volunteers’ work and support that I decided to donate FDBA $250.00! Thank you so much, Anna Slye, Jesse Wall, Martin Zarate, James Slye, Kathryn Zarate, David Williams, Kimberly Williams, Roxanne Harvell, Maria Marquez, Winfield Sainpreux and all the CoNavigators with all of my heart for your utmost support for Florida DeafBlind Association! It was so much FUN day! Also, congratulations to Ms Iris Cruz-Whidden for her official position on board as a Member At Large.   In addition, thank you Anna Slye for arranging a wonderful event. Super job!

Florida CoNavigator (FCN) Coordinator, Victoria Magliocchno  and I discussed a new assistant for FCN. We agreed to appoint Kimberly Williams as FCN Assistant. Congratulations! That's so exciting!

I am also stoked to share with you about upcoming event, the Florida American Sign Language Festival in Orlando on Saturday, March 9, 2024 at 4603 W Colonial Dr, Orlando, FL 32808 (<https://www.google.com/maps/search/4603+W+Colonial+Dr,+Orlando,+FL+32808?entry=gmail&source=g>).

The Central Florida Fair is celebrating its 112th year as a 501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit organization in Central Florida.

Come and visit Florida ASL Festival and enjoy a midway featuring over 60 booth vendors, rides, games, food, live music and entertainment, animals, livestock exhibitions and competitive exhibits, and so much more. Come celebrate the community and make lifelong memories with your family and friends!

Rides & Festival All The Day & Night They will have a variety of carnival activities for kids and for adults. Watch a video show presentation, win raffle prizes, music entertainment. New signers and Hearing people who want to learn American Sign Language, bring them over there. Free admission for everyone. Many food & drinks trucks and vendors will be there.

FDBA will host a booth at Florida ASL Festival at 12 PM - 8 PM. Gate entrance will close at 10 PM.  FREE Admission - let’s have a blast together.

Regarding the FDBA State Meeting, FDBA’s 20th Anniversary, we have started planning field trips - Please be sure to save the date and spread the word to all DeafBlind and CoNavigators you know and encourage them to join. Let’s have a blast in Fort Myers, Florida on May 16th through May 19th, 2024.

All of the former Presidents, Nellie Pohlmeyer, Victoria Magliocchino, David Roberts, and I will be there to help celebrate our FDBA’s 20th Anniversary.

More to come! Stay tuned! Link: <https://fldeafblind.org/events.html>

I am still looking for new  FDBA representatives to set up DeafBlind Social events in each major city such as Fort Lauderdale, Miami, Orlando, Pensacola, Tallahassee, Tampa, and etc.  If you are interested, please contact the FDBA President.

I would LOVE FDBA Members and Sponsors to come and help us as volunteers for any fundraising programs to raise money and support FDBA.  Please email me if you have any new  ideas to raise money in 2024.  It would be greatly appreciated!

Let me share my goal of the 2024 Project with you all – I want to start traveling to the whole State of Florida to introduce many DeafBlind to FDBA and we are here to support every DeafBlind’s Quality of Life!

May this new year bring new happiness, new goals, new achievements, and a lot of new inspirations in your life.

PT Cheers to new beginnings of FDBA in 2024.

Warms Regards,

Lara ‘Rose’ Wall ~ FDBA President