



Fall Newsletter 2019

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What's NEW at DB CAN NJ?

NEW Changes on the Board of Trustees:

Lisa Mauriello, a Certified Public Accountant, has joined the board as Treasurer. Lisa has the ability to support budget planning and execution to best serve our organization and the DeafBlind Community.

Sherel Beslanovitz also joined the board as a trustee. Sherel served our nation for 20 years as a US Marine. She retired in 2018 and is excited to serve the DeafBlind Community.

New trustee **Betsy White** is eager to share her strengths in connecting deafblind people to resources and to each other. With past experience in finance and customer service, Betsy, who is deafblind, is currently a braille instructor at JKTC.

Kathy Kady-Hopkins, a founder of DB CAN NJ, has left the board to devote more time to personal, professional and other philanthropic responsibilities. We are grateful for Kathy's belief in our mission, her open and giving heart, and the support she and ASL IRS have given us these past four years. Thank you, Kathy!

NEW Committees Established: The DB CAN NJ Board voted to establish the following committees: Executive, chaired by Kathy Gabry; Sports & Recreation, chaired by Paul Werner; Public Relations, chaired by Sherel Beslanovitz; and Training & Education, co-chaired by Kathy Gabry and Mark Gasaway. To join a committee, please email dbcannj@gmail.com

A NEW Look on Facebook: Our Facebook page has a “Facelift” thanks to the efforts of our Public Relations chair Sherel. With Sherel’s expertise, during DeafBlind Awareness Week, we reached 518 notifications. Follow us, friend us, share us!

DB CAN NJ Hosts Board Meeting: In July, our Board of Trustees held a strategic planning meeting. We agreed to continue our commitment to providing Access Providers (SSPs), and to collaborating with other organizations for the benefit of the DeafBlind Community. A major undertaking will be finding a university with which to partner on the development of a college-level Access Provider for DeafBlind degree program. We look forward to your support in all of these exciting activities!

Our Website is LIVE!

We’re thrilled to let you know that DB CAN NJ is finally LIVE at www.dbcannj.org After 6 months of testing and tweaking, we’re accessible, thanks to the efforts of our web designer Tom West and Brian Mackey, who is well-known for developing accessible websites for the National Federation of the Blind affiliates. Through DB CAN NJ’s website, we hope to educate the public about the DeafBlind Community and the good work that we do. We can also accept donations, **and** you can buy your ticket for our biggest event of the year – Cornhole DOMination and Chili Cook-Off – on the site, too.

NJ Celebrates Helen Keller DeafBlind Awareness Week

DB CAN NJ was proud to lead the effort of 12 organizations asking New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy to recognize Helen Keller DeafBlind Awareness Week June 23 – 29, 2019. On May 3, the governor agreed and signed our proclamation. On behalf of Governor Murphy, Old Bridge Mayor Owen Henry and members of the Old Bridge Township Council presented the proclamation to us at the DeafBlind League of New Jersey’s annual picnic at Cheesequake State Park on June 15. More than 50 DBL NJ members, supporters, their families, friends and Access Providers/SSPs spent the afternoon together, shared a delicious catered lunch and had the opportunity to network and have fun. Thanks to our entire network and supporters for making this happen.



ASL Festival at Union County College

Thanks to Board President Kathy Gabry and volunteers Maria, Mirellie and Ray for spreading the word about DB CAN NJ at Union County College's ASL Festival on April 27. Many folks stopped by our table to chat and wish us well, and several donated to our cause.



Summer Shopping & Ice Cream at the Menlo Park Mall

On Friday, July 26, DB CAN NJ hosted a summer shopping & ice cream social event at Menlo Park Mall. Twenty-seven people attended, and a great time was had by all! Access Providers/SSPs were provided by DB CAN NJ and SSPNJ. Our next shopping event will be Holiday Shopping on December 7. Watch for details soon!



CORNHOLE DOMination & CHILI COOK-OFF Saturday, Nov. 2, 2019

Buy your tickets today - \$10! (At the door - \$20)

<https://www.dbcannj.org/events>

Do you like to shop online? Amazon Prime shoppers unite!



Consider adding your favorite nonprofit (DB CAN NJ) to your Amazon Prime SMILE account and Amazon will automatically donate .5% to DB CAN NJ every time you shop! This is a wonderful way to give back to our community when you shop for your everyday essentials, holiday decorations, gifts, and knickknacks or do-dads.

Inspiration Corner: Alice Eaddy, Paralympic Athlete

By Sherel Beslanovitz

Neither thunder nor lightning can stop Alice Eaddy on race day! Alice, shown in the photo at right hurling the shotput, is a national track and field competitor on the Blind Athletes, Inc. team, and she's DeafBlind. Alice summarizes her athleticism in this way: "I'm definitely a unique, national level competitor. I don't go at my sports endeavors halfway. I compete to look good and be reasonably, and realistically, competitive. I'm not just a competitor, I give track and field everything I've got." Alice thrives as an athlete and encourages other deafblind people to participate in track and field sports.

Alice especially enjoys the camaraderie on the field, and she always makes an effort to communicate with her competitors who accept her competitive spirit without knowledge of the duality of her deafblindness. To foster those exchanges at every meet, she brings communication cards and a dry erase marker, as well as her mobility cane and her guide dog, Wanda. She also enjoys the check-in process and meet and greet events, as she says they're good times to get to know people. "Sometimes I'm in groups with youngsters under 12, and I've learned the value of a good knock-knock joke to pass the time of slow moving events," Alice adds.



In the 2019 Great Lakes Games in Chicago, Alice won first place in her age group in the 4K, shot put, javelin, discus, and the 100-, 200- and 400-meter runs. She used a guide runner for the 200- and 400-meter runs. In 2018, Alice participated and medaled in the Rothman Orthopaedics 8K in Philadelphia, where her completion time for the race-walk was 1 hour, 17 minutes and 48 seconds, and she placed 44th in her age group in the women's Division of almost 2,000 athletes. Shown on the left is Alice with her guide dog, Wanda, at the 2018 Arizona World Para Athletics Grand Prix - Desert Challenge Games, where she won gold in the javelin and bronze for the 400-meter run. Alice says that she has high expectations for herself, and she doesn't quit. When

her coaches give her a target pace to shoot for, she tries to nail it every time.

Alice has a cochlear implant and a hearing aid, but bad weather often precludes her from using them. Even if she is wearing them, Alice can't hear the start gun, so an official alerts her to begin by tapping on her left shoulder, and there is also an official at the finish line. These accommodations ensure she starts and finishes at the right time with the group. Alice sums up her sports participation by saying, "I know that I'm a role model for the DeafBlind Community. My participation allows the public to see that people who have differing abilities do not let them get in the way of living their lives. It makes me proud of how I can put myself out there and GO FOR IT!!!"



Upcoming DB CAN NJ Events

- ◆ November 2 Cornhole DOMination & Chili Cook-Off, Hasbrouck Heights
 - ◆ December 7 Group Holiday Mall Shopping
 - ◆ December TBA Barnes & Noble Gift Wrapping, Clifton
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Help us continue the great work we're doing by:

- ◆ Sending us your comments on this newsletter or anything that's important to you and related to the DeafBlind community. Email your comments to: dbcannj@gmail.com or message our FaceBook page at DeafBlind Community Access Network of NJ
 - ◆ Following us on FaceBook, and sharing our site with your friends and networks.
 - ◆ Making a donation: Send your check payable to DB CAN NJ to 187 Stewart Avenue, Kearny, NJ 07032 OR give online at <https://www.dbcannj.org/donate>
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