

## Knights of the Blind Report

KOTB was happy to receive acknowledgment by the Council's Proclamation of October 15th as White Cane Day in the US, and the first week of February as White Cane Week in Canada. Building on that proclamation, Lions joined in their communities in requesting and supporting proclamations in cities, counties, and provinces. Public walks, demonstrations, presentations, and publications all reinforcing the importance of the White Cane as a symbol of Independence, Mobility and Safety for people who are blind, rather than as a sign of disability.

With the beginning of the school year and through this spring, teams of a Blind or Low Vision person and a members of local Lions Clubs continued the Grandpa's White Cane presentations in mostly 3rd grade classrooms in Districts L, O and N, as well as other populations in District S. This interactive program continues to be our key project of educating the public to improve access, inclusiveness and awareness of technology that empower people who are blind. This effort has brought the total classroom presentations to date to over 1,500 students in more than 70 separate classes, since we began this project in March 2023, and many have already committed to have us return to next year's 3rd graders. We continue to meet parents whose children have enthusiastically shared their experience with our teams.

We worked collaboratively with Hawaiian KOTB, Lions from MD19, members of the American Council of the Blind and others for the first Annual Virtual KOTB Christmas/Holiday party. The 2nd Annual Event will take place 12/14/24, 5 PM. Be on the lookout for your invitation.

Collaboration with community partners from Teachers of Blind and Low Vision Students and organizations of and for the Blind we've worked to provide holiday parties, egg hunts, fishing derbies and develop relationships.

This 2023-2024 year KOTB had the opportunity to stay closer to our Districts with members on the Cabinets of Districts L, O, N, and S, as well as participating in these 4 District Conventions, with exhibits and in some cases breakout sessions. We hope to secure members in District I this year as well, to provide more outreach and support for District I.

Remember that KOTB Committee membership is open to Lions and Leos of MD19, with a requirement that the majority of our Committee is Blind.

If you have Zones or Clubs interested in connecting with organizations of or for the blind and would like to know how you can improve access and inclusiveness and membership, please contact me at [billscholl134@gmail.com](mailto:billscholl134@gmail.com) (360) 520-6802 or KOTB Secretary at [colette.arvidson@gmail.com](mailto:colette.arvidson@gmail.com) (360) 391-5880