

The Journey

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF THE BLIND CONVENTION 2012

Capital City Centre Hotel, 1961 Douglas Street
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Friday, May 11 to Sunday, May 13, 2012.

Presented by



CFB

Canadian Federation of the Blind

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"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

Lao-tzu, The Way of Lao-tzu,
Chinese philosopher (604 BC - 531 BC)

We believe that with the appropriate training, attitude and opportunities, blind people can (and do) achieve their dreams, not the diminished dreams of low expectations, but the dreams that come from knowledge, skills, self-confidence and self-respect. We believe that it is never too late to learn new techniques and new ways of thought. We believe that each of us has a spark of creativity within us which can be ignited when we come together to teach, to learn and to dream.

The **Canadian Federation of the Blind** (CFB) is a movement of blind people committed to the equality and empowerment of blind Canadians. Members work for change, promote the abilities of blind people and work together to gain confidence and skills.

The Canadian Federation of the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind have come together to share in a journey, a journey to empower one another, to raise awareness about the unlimited potential of blind people, and together change what it means to be blind.

“Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.”

Helen Keller

Our Philosophy:

- We are not an organization speaking on behalf of blind people; rather we are an organization of blind people speaking for ourselves;
- We believe that with the right attitude, training and experiences, blindness is not a handicap, but a characteristic;
- We believe it is respectable to be blind; We believe with training and opportunity, blind people can compete on terms of equality with their sighted peers;
- We believe the real problem of blindness is not the lack of eyesight. The real problem is the lack of positive information about blindness and the achievements of blind people.

Our Membership:

We are lawyers, store personnel, psychologists, teachers, office workers, factory workers, writers, students, mothers and fathers. We have as many talents, jobs, skills, flaws and weaknesses as does the sighted population. We encompass a range of humanity, young, old, white, black, First Nations, men, women and children. We have joined together to celebrate the achievements of blind people. United, we will attain equality and first-class citizenship. United, we will change what it means to be blind.

Our Executive:

Elizabeth Lalonde, President

Mary Ellen Gabias, Vice President

Larry Scharschmidt, Treasurer

Dr. Paul Gabias, Second Vice President

Doris Belusic, Secretary

Erin Lacharity, Member at Large

Oriano Belusic, Past President

**A Special Thank You to Our Sponsors
who have made this Convention a success**



Victoria Imperial Lions Club



Coast Capital Savings



HumanWare



Capital City Centre Hotel

PCS

Personal Communications Systems



AbleTech Solutions

CONVENTION AGENDA

Friday, May 11, 2012

9:30 AM - 11:30 AM Workshop on E-Bay and Other Online Entrepreneurial Activities

- Presented by Mary Ellen Gabias
- Assisted by Heidi Propp and Oriano Belusic

11:30 AM - 2:00 PM Break

2:00 PM - 5:00 PM Adaptive Technology and Blindness Resource Exhibit

- featuring HumanWare and Personal Communications Systems
- Try some of the latest adaptive technology.
- Check out Federation literature, learn some Braille, try an NFB long white cane and buy a CFB t-shirt.

(Note: Please drop off donated auction items for the evenings fundraising auction between 2 PM and 5 PM at the table near the back of the Exhibit room. If possible please provide a description of your items in Braille or a print description that can be transcribed).

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM On Site Registration

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM Welcome Reception
Enjoy appetizers with your Federation family!
(Reception food provided with registration).

Greetings and remarks from:

- Lana Popham, MLA for Saanich South
 - Councillor Geoff Young, City of Victoria
-

8:00 PM A "Rowdy and Raucous" CFB Auction

(This Auction definitely won't be silent!)

Join us for our auction to raise funds for the Canadian Federation of the Blind. Bid on fun, interesting and delicious items, and have a rollicking good time!

CONVENTION AGENDA

Saturday, May 12, 2012

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM On Site Registration

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM Opening Ceremonies

- MC: Elizabeth Lalonde, President of the Canadian Federation of the Blind and Mike Freeman, President of the National Federation of the Blind of Washington State and Board Member of the National Federation of the Blind
- Opening entertainment performed by Karl-Erik Sonvisen on guitar

9:15 AM - 9:30 AM Presidential Report

- Elizabeth Lalonde, President of the Canadian Federation of the Blind

9:30 AM to 9:45 AM The Federation In Your Journey: The Courage to Try

- Mary Ellen Gabias, Canadian Federation of the Blind founding member and Vice-President.

9:45 AM to 10:00 AM The Politics of Blindness: From Charity to Parity

- Graeme McCreath, Author, Long-Time Blindness Activist and member of the Canadian Federation of the Blind.

www.thepoliticsofblindness.com

CONVENTION AGENDA

Saturday, May 12, 2012 (continued)

10:00 AM to 11:15 AM Employment Panel

- Perspectives from blind adults about their post-secondary and employment experiences, job-finding tips and strategies, and current jobs and career aspirations
- Panel Facilitated by Gail Copp, IT Specialist and member of the Canadian Federation of the Blind.
- Panel Participants Include:

Karl-Erik Sonvisen
Jessica Rathwell
Remy Chartier
Donna Hudon
Harold Tritthardt
Aedan Staddon

11:15 AM - 11:30 AM National Federation of the Blind Employment Promotion and Programs

- Mike Freeman, President of the National Federation of the Blind of Washington State and National Federation of the Blind Board Member.

11:30 AM to 12:00 PM Update from HumanWare

- Dean Yano, Western Canadian Representative, HumanWare.

The Braille evolution

- Amit Ram, blind AbleTech representative.

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Lunch

- provided with registration

1:00 PM - 1:20 PM Report of the National Federation of the Blind

- Mike Freeman, President of the National Federation of the Blind of Washington State and National Federation of the Blind Board Member.
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CONVENTION AGENDA

Saturday, May 12, 2012 (continued)

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| 1:20 PM - 1:40 PM | My Journey at the Louisiana Center for the Blind <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elizabeth Lalonde, President of the Canadian Federation of the Blind. |
| 1:40 PM - 1:45 PM | My Experiences Training at the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton Colorado. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simon Jaeger |
| 1:45 PM - 1:55 PM | Training, Opportunity and Blindness Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heidi Propp, member of the Canadian Federation of the Blind. |
| 1:55 PM - 2:05 PM | Journey From the Visual to the Nonvisual <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Live interview with CFB members' Doris Belusic and Gail Copp• Interview conducted by Elizabeth Lalonde. |
| 2:05 PM - 2:10 PM | My Experiences Using a Cane and Learning About Braille <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marlene Cust |
| 2:10 PM - 2:20 PM | A Home Grown Public Library Solution <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allan Carlson, Project Specialist, Libraries and Literacy Branch, British Columbia Ministry of Education |
| 2:20 PM - 2:30 PM | EBay and other opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mary Ellen Gabias, National and International Employment Advisor for the Blind• Oriano Belusic Canadian Federation of the Blind Board Member |
| 2:30 PM - 2:40 PM | Beginning to Believe: When being blind doesn't make you different, it stops being the thing people see first <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shawn Marsolais, Founder and Manager of Programs & Services at Blind Beginnings. |

www.blindbeginnings.ca

CONVENTION AGENDA

Saturday, May 12, 2012 (continued)

2:40 PM - 2:50 PM My Experiences as a Blind Spanish Teacher and New Citizen to Canada

- Marcelina Stanton
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2:50 PM - 3:00 PM Blindness and Disability Rights in Afghanistan

- Alyas Omeed, Human Rights Activist, originally from Kabul, Afghanistan.

"I like to give voice to minorities, and those who are not heard."

3:00 PM - 3:30 PM Panel: The Journey to Human Rights

- Facilitated by Oriano Belusic, Past President and Founding Member of the Canadian Federation of the Blind.

Hear from blind people about human rights cases happening now in Canada including:

- Miles Motture, University of Victoria law student, on the case of accessible electronic text books
 - Oriano Belusic and Graeme McCreath on other human rights issues.
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3:30 PM - 4:15 PM Panel: Recreation in Our Lives

- Facilitated by Graeme McCreath, runner, Physiotherapist and record-holding weight-lifter
 - Rose Kamma Sarkany, marathon runner and co-ordinator of "Running For Change."
 - Shawn Marsolais, Para-Olympic athlete and international Goal Ball competitor.
 - Karl-Erik Sonvisen , skier and Biathlon competitor
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4:15 PM - 4:30 PM Closing Remarks and Questions

CONVENTION AGENDA

Saturday, May 12, 2012 (continued)

6:30 PM - 9:00 PM

Banquet

- Sit-down Dinner provided with registration.

Keynote Address, The Patterns of Blindness

- delivered by Mike Freeman, President of the National Federation of the Blind of Washington State and Board Member of the National Federation of the Blind.
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9:00 - Midnight

Member's talent night

- Chat with friends, unwind after the convention and listen to some great talent by CFB members and guests!
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Sunday, May 13, 2012

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Canadian Federation of the Blind Annual General Meeting

Thank you to all the participants
who contributed to the success of this convention.