# Focus On ACBI

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# A Publication of the American Council of the Blind of Indiana

#

# October-December 2023

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Mary Stores edits this newsletter and can be contacted at mstores@iu.edu or 812-272-1876.

Edward Stahl narrates the Focus for cassette output. Don Koors is responsible for the printing and mailing of hard copies, as well as e-mail distribution and cassette duplication and distribution.

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## Ways to contribute to the American Council of the Blind of Indiana:

Those much-needed contributions, which are tax-deductible, can be sent to ACBI, Attn: Cindy Brooking, 676 VFW Road, Mitchell, Indiana 47446 or through our website noted above.
Vehicle donations: 1-800-929-8659. You can donate cars, trucks, vans, and boats.  Live operators are on hand 7 days a week and it includes free pick-up.
Shop [Terri Lynn](https://acb-indiana.terrilynn.com/) online or call 1-800-323-0775 Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. CST. A portion of every product sold will benefit ACBI.

Consider including a gift to ACBI in your Last Will and Testament.

## From Your President

## By Rita Kersh

It has certainly been a busy fall in ACBI. Some of our members were on the convention planning committee with ACBO and had monthly calls for most of the year. If you were in attendance at the convention in Columbus, Ohio you would have experienced the work of this committee. A lot of time and effort went into the whole weekend.

ACBI had eleven in person and around six by Zoom. The ACBI business meeting was available virtually, so those on Zoom could vote.

Our board will change for 2024. Here is the line-up: President-Rita Kersh; Vice-president-Dee Ann Hart; Secretary-Mary Stores; Treasurer-Cindy Brooking and board members Cliff Goodman, Kari Goodman, Earlene Hughes, Don Koors, Gerry Koors, David Rosenkoetter, Pat Tussing, Regina Vonderhaar and Mel Wobschall.

Starting in 2024 ACBI will offer a lifetime membership for $100. This only covers ACBI dues, so unless you are an ACB lifetime member, you’ll still pay the $5 to national and your chapter dues. Watch the acb-indiana.org website for the updated dues around the end of the year.

ACBI did very well on our fund-raising efforts at the convention. Our fall raffle, Hofstetter 50/50 raffle, earnings from the ACBI vendor table and the auction brought in more money than we expected. Talk about a pleasant surprise.

The biggest news of all is that our 2024 joint convention with ACBO will be held in Indianapolis at the Crown Plaza Airport October 24-27, 2024. Mark your calendar now for next year’s convention. More details will be forthcoming in future issues of the Focus newsletter.

Now we’re heading into the Christmas season and then we’ll start off another new year with big plans and lots to do. So, I want to wish you all a wonderful Christmas! May 2024 be all you hope for.

## SCAVI News

## By Dolly Sowder

The South Central Association of the visually impaired (SCAVI) held a Fund-raiser Chili Extravaganza and silent auction to recognize White Cane Day on October 17. Several visual aids were available for folks to try with the option of wearing a blindfold. Many door prizes were given out. The Bedford Noon Lions Club was a great help. Fun was had by all.

In November 11 ACBI members attended the ACBI and ACBO conference in Columbus Ohio and several attended virtually.

Indiana will host the ACBI and ACBO convention October 24th through the 27th in 2024. It will be held in Indianapolis.

In December SCAVI will be planning a Christmas party.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

## HASC News

## By Mel Wobschall

Hello! Here is the latest update from the Hoosier All State Chapter of the American Council of The Blind of Indiana.

We didn't meet in November, due to some of the members going to the ACBI/OH convention in Columbus, OH over Veterans' Day weekend.

At the convention, Mel was even a panelist representing games for Android users on Friday during the audio gaming session. Convention goers all escaped their rooms during the Saturday Morning excursion to Escape Room USA Columbus, one group with 13 seconds left before some dangerous virus was sent into the world. Saturday evening's auction was a success, too.

On a side note, since we are a virtual chapter, conventions are a fun place where we as members can meet up in person. It would be very nifty if we could have a lot of people from HASC show up, although I understand that not everyone can go.

Earlene Hughes has announced her resignation as treasurer of HASC due to health reasons. We wish her a speedy recovery and all the best. During our next meeting, we will elect a new treasurer.

## ACBIInformation Station on December 11

## By Rita Kersh

Next Monday at 7:00 p.m. ET we’ll get a little bit of Christmas cheer when Mary Stores tests your knowledge of Christmas time with some trivia. See the Zoom info below to join the call.

American Council of the Blind Indiana is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: American Council of The Blind Indiana Information Station Call

Monday, December 11, 2023, at 7:00 PM Indiana (East)

Join Zoom Meeting:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87648885248?pwd=bWE2cFR5VlNVa0t2RXdWTHRxUDgwUT09](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fus02web.zoom.us%2Fj%2F87648885248%3Fpwd%3DbWE2cFR5VlNVa0t2RXdWTHRxUDgwUT09&data=05%7C01%7Cmstores%40iu.edu%7C6cd30a4fb2ba454f76f308dbf5181471%7C1113be34aed14d00ab4bcdd02510be91%7C0%7C0%7C638373256018799890%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2vqFPj0CoB6Ri5ZF%2FaplusmqwMPqwyJ33v%2BXdBVetwk%3D&reserved=0)

Meeting ID: 876 4888 5248

Passcode: 233250

Dial by your location:

 +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

        +1 646 931 3860 US

## The Importance of Having People with Disabilities at the Decision-Making Table

## By Dee Ann Hart

### About Dee Ann Hart

Dee Ann Hart, a white/Caucasian female, short (collar length) brown hair, blue eyes, outdoors on a sunny day in late Fall 2022. The sun highlights her hair and reflects off her skin.

Dee Ann is 59 years old. Born with severe low vision/visual impairment, 20/200 or worse. Thanks to developments in low vision rehabilitation Dee Ann has enhanced her visual function and improved her quality of life. Dee Ann has experienced the personal impact of irreversible severe vision impairment, delayed motor, language, emotional, social and cognitive development, with lifelong consequences. Dee Ann's severe vision impairment has also impacted educational achievement, employment and mental health.

Dee Ann has found advocacy and leadership to be among her true inner callings - an internal feeling that drives the passion for her purpose - in life.

### INDIANA DISABILITY JUSTICE

What is the importance of having people with disabilities at the decision-making table?

Disability inclusion allows for people with disabilities to take advantage of the benefits of the same activities experienced by people who do not have a disability. Inclusion should lead to increased participation in socially expected life roles and activities – such as being a student, worker, friend, community member, patient, spouse, partner, or parent. The importance of disability representation in leadership fosters a more inclusive and belonging culture.

Disability inclusion means understanding the relationship between the way people function and how they participate in society, and making sure everybody has the same opportunities to participate in every aspect of life to the best of their abilities and desires.

Decision making is an essentially social process adopted by individuals or groups to identify and choose the best choice among several alternatives. Decision-making choices are influenced by the preferences, values, and beliefs of the individuals or groups involved in the decision-making process.

Social inclusion is the state of having the resources and opportunities to participate in social, economic, and cultural life, and to enjoy the standard life considered normal in the society in which we live.

Making decisions is vital to a person's sovereignty and their spirit of personhood. It is a key component for enabling individuals to exercise their authority, have control over their lives, and interact with others in society.

The rights-based model focuses on the equal participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of their lives, becoming productive members of society.

The service delivery approach was changed to a rights-based approach in the late 1990’s to enable people with disabilities to exercise their civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights on an equal basis with others. The rights-based approach aims to promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by people with disabilities within the national legal framework. This framework tries to overcome exclusion and inequity at institutional, attitudinal, physical, legal, and communication levels.

Participation in decision making is an essential factor in measuring the social inclusion of individuals and groups, especially concerning people with disabilities. Each person with a disability can make decisions for themselves or participate in family- and community-level decisions. Participating in decision making at these three levels creates a sense of ownership among people with disabilities concerning familial, communal and societal activities. The personal decisions enable people with disabilities to improve fundamental aspects of their lives such as with respect to food, clothes and other basic needs. At the second level, the decisions help people with disabilities make choices regarding their health and education. Therefore, it is mandatory to involve people with disabilities in all decision-making processes that impact them.

Participation in decision making is a fundamental human right for all, including people with disabilities. Active participation in decision making at the personal, familial, and communal levels gives hope to people with disabilities that they can be productive members of society and can consider themselves as a valued part of society, compelling their social inclusion in mainstream society.

In addition, it is important to ensure participation of people with disabilities in decision-making processes in family, community, school and other relevant institutions in order to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are properly integrated at all these levels, and that their needs are satisfactorily provided for at each institutional level.

“Nothing about us without us" is a slogan used to communicate the idea that no policy should be decided by any representative without the full and direct participation of members of the group affected by that policy. The motto, ”Nothing about us without us" relies on this principle of participation, and it has been used by organizations of people with disabilities throughout the years as part of the global movement to achieve the full participation and equalization of opportunities for, by and with persons with disabilities. The concept of “nothing about us without us" signifies the belief that disability rights should not be created without including the voices of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations. The observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons will focus on the active involvement of persons with disabilities in the planning of strategies and policies that affect their lives. This is the importance of having people with disabilities at the decision-making table!

# Intra-State Auction March 23, 2024

# By Pat Tussing

This is a brief notice that 5 State Affiliates are gathering donations for the first Intra-State Auction on Saturday, March 23, 2024. The auction will take place on ACB Media and Zoom. GuideLights And Gadgets ([www.guidelightsandgadgets.us](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.guidelightsandgadgets.us%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cmstores%40iu.edu%7C5ce5534a198e47f1956a08dbf2c2a555%7C1113be34aed14d00ab4bcdd02510be91%7C0%7C0%7C638370690037368487%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=%2FI38fOws%2BVLQHU5sLZKBQxNOApMuCuxUskUCSgWO99U%3D&reserved=0)) is donating $500 of wonderful medical, guide dog and electronic supply products. The Literacy Project has pledged the same amount of money.

We would love for you to contribute More items! the more items we have, the more money we will make. Please feel free to email me if you are interested in contributing.

Happy Holidays to all!

## December Holidays

## By Mary Stores

Christmas is everywhere in December! It is a time filled with preparation, stress, shopping, cooking and families. It also is a time of loneliness and struggle. Christmas also outshines most of the other holidays celebrated in December. I thought it might be fun to explore those other holidays.

* St. Nicholas Day – December 6: St. Nicholas was born in the third century, and he was known for his acts of charity. After his death, he became the patron saint of children and gift-giving. On the night of December 5, some children leave their shoes outside in the hopes that St. Nicholas will fill them with candy. I found this out when I was in middle school, and went to a friend’s house, along with Mel, to spend the night. In being generous to others, this day can continue to be celebrated.
* Hanukkah: Starting and Ending dates vary annually. This year, though, Hanukkah starts on December 7 and last eight days. It is known as the Festival of the Rededication of the Holy temple. It is celebrated each day with the lighting of a candle on the Menorah. There are also traditional foods, games and gifts.
* Immaculate Conception – December 8: Celebrated by Catholics, this day is to commemorate the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For me personally, it’s a day where you have to include time for going to Mass. I have never been to a fireworks celebration or eaten food in honor of Mary. However, a lot of countries celebrate it, including Argentina, the Philippines and Nicaragua.
* Bodhi Day (also known as Rahotsu) – December 8 in some parts of the world, otherwise varies annually like Easter: Celebrates the Enlightenment of Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha. Buddhists celebrate this day by meditating.
* Feast Day of Our Lady Guadalupe – December 12: Celebrated by Mexicans and Mexican Americans all over the world, it commemorates the day when Mary is said to have appeared to St. Juan Diego in the hills of Tepeyac to ask for a church. Pilgrims travel to her shrine and have shrines in their own homes and churches. The day is celebrated with dancing, singing and celebrations.
* Yule – December 21-January 1: Celebrates the longest night of the year to the coming of the New Year by Wiccans and Pagans. The lighting of the Yule log is one way of celebrating this day.
* Boxing Day – December 26: This holiday is celebrated in Britain, Canada, Australia and other countries. It has evolved into a commercial holiday of shopping, leisure and entertainment. It originated from the time when aristocrats gave boxes of gifts to their servants.
* Zarathosht Diso – December 26: A Zoroastrian day to honor the death of their prophet. Zoroastrianism is an ancient monotheistic religion that also has the belief in consequences for good and evil. With around 200,000 followers, this religion is still practiced by Farsi communities in India and Iran and around the world.
* Kwanza – December 26-January 1: This holiday was created in 1966 by Maulana Karenga after the Watts Rebellion, a 6-day uprising in 1965 where a drunken African American man was arrested by white California police officers, occurred, followed by at least 34 deaths of mostly black people. The purpose of the holiday was to unite the community after that uprising to honor African American tradition. The name Kwanza comes from the Swahili phrase ”matunda ya kwanza,” which means “first fruits.”
* New Year’s Eve: December 31: A celebration of the end of the year and a hopeful new beginning.

Whatever holidays you are celebrating this December, I hope they are joyous, blessed and bright.

## Contact Information for the ACB Board

### Officers

President: Rita Kersh, Bedford

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SCAVI: Dolly Sowder, Bedford

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Hoosier All State: Jim Stanga, West Lafayette

jimstanga@gmail.com

NOTE: Mention of products and services in this newsletter is for informational purposes only and does not imply endorsement of any such product of service by the American Council of the Blind of Indiana.

## Renewal Application

Persons interested in becoming a member or renewing their membership need only to send their check for $7, payable to ACBI, to Cindy Brooking, 676 VFW Road, Mitchell, Indiana 47446, along with the following information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Blind or visually impaired? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_no