A publication of the Georgia Council of the Blind

An Affiliate of the American Council of the Blind An organization promoting a hand up not a hand out

Spring/Summer 2014

Georgia Council of the Blind Office

145 Barrington Drive, Athens GA 30605,

706-850-4025, [info@georgiacounciloftheblind.org](mailto:info@georgiacounciloftheblind.org), [www.georgiacounciloftheblind.org](http://www.georgiacounciloftheblind.org)

GCB President: William K. Holley, Jr.

185 Weatherly Woods Drive, Winterville GA 30683, 706-410-4945, gcbill850@yahoo.com

GCB Webmaster: Steven Longmire, [info@sunbright.biz](mailto:info@sunbright.biz)

GCB Digest Editor: Mr. Clifford Jones, cliffjones916@gmail.com

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**From Your Editor, Cliff Jones**

Hello, GCB Family. We thank each one who has submitted articles in this issue of our magazine. If you have any change of address, telephone number, email address, or desired change of format, please inform our GCB Secretary, Robin Oliver at 706-208-7132 or via Email at gcbfyi@yahoo.com .

**GCB Presidential Message, William Holley**

“*One of the most agonizing problems within our human experience is that few, if any, of us live to see our fondest hopes fulfilled. The hopes of our childhood and the promises of our mature years are unfinished symphonies”.*

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Greetings fellow GCB members, it is my sincere hope that this message finds you and each of family member in good health and spirits. The use of the letter or Word I is something we must remove from our language when it comes to developing the growth and leadership of GCB.

Our committee structure is instrumental in helping us to better understand miscommunications in the use of language. It has been bought to my attention on more than one occasion that decisions are made by Boards and Committees. We all know the GCB Constitutional mandates, but as leaders we frequently become autocrats during the decision making process. It is our responsibility to remember we are a team and we all share in the decision making process of GCB. All GCB members have the ability to participate in the leadership of our organization. In the case of the Conference/Convention committee you are encouraged to contact the committee members to request and share your thoughts about our state convention. We are looking forward to your participation and support. We hope to see you on August 1-3, 2014 in Augusta, Georgia.

William (Bill) Holley

**GCB Board Meeting Minutes**

January 18, 2014 Board Meeting Minutes Meeting   Location via Phone                                           Playback #1.605.476.4099 PIN 880828

President Bill Holley called the meeting to order and followed with a moment of silence.

Roll Call: Members present; President Bill Holley, 2nd V. Steve Longmire, Secretary Robin Oliver, Treasurer Jerrie Toney, representing Members-At-Large Tim Kelly, Athens Daniel Myers, Augusta Chris Chavous, East Georgia Christine O’Brien, Greater Columbus Greg McDuffie, representing Greater Hall Judy Presley, Metro Atlanta Brent Reynolds, Northwest Ron Burgess, Rome Amanda Wilson, Savannah Kim Harrison and West Georgia Steve Estes. Other GCB members present were Joan Estes and Marsha Farrow, as well as former member Alice Ritchhart.

The Secretary swore in the officers for the year of 2014.

Approval of Minutes - the minutes had been mailed/emailed to the board.  There were no changes or questions concerning the minutes, so they were motioned to be accepted as decimated by Greg McDuffie, properly seconded by Ron Burgess and the board voted to carry the motion.  
  
Treasury Report - Amanda had a question about the line item labeled Youth Grant. This is money that Evan Bernard (one of the speakers at the "Aloha GCB" 1 day event of 2011 in Carrollton) has received from Disney to continue working on Braille Trails throughout Georgia. Evan's mother would like GCB to hold onto the money for now. Tim suggested that the finance committee handled future actions concerning this matter. Marsha was concerned that the Evans used the Chattooga Chapter EIN, and didn't want Chattooga to be caught into any loop or anything not proper. She will check her records to see if there is any outstanding involvement. Future discussions will be held face to face or by phone with the Evans present. Both the Budget report and Proposed Budget, as well as a Proposed Budget with changes had been emailed out. After Jerrie asked if there were any questions to changes being made, after no response, Greg McDuffie motioned that the report containing the changes, as long with any other changes be filed to audit, Daniel Myers seconded. The board voted to carry the motion.

Constitution Committee  
     1. Constitution Review: no one had inquires about the current Constitution.   
     2. Proposed Constitution Amendment: Robin read the Proposed Amendment: Article V: Officers, Directors and Appointees Section 1: Constitutional Officers

The proposed change adds that no two (2) Constitutional officers be from the same chapter or county. The Constitution Committee (chapter secretaries) received the proposal in writing from Greg McDuffie, Cliff Jones and Joey Wilson. The secretaries will gather the votes and the board will vote on the proposal at the April meeting. Bill interjected on the Constitution Review, that he wanted it clear that as a board representative you are allowed to miss only one (1) meeting before you should be removed from office by your chapter, and the chapter selects another representative. This is important to make certain quorums are formed and the chapter stays informed. It is important that the leaders take their duties and board attendance seriously. This doesn't mean the chapter president has to attend every meeting personally, but they should make certain they have a chapter representative.   
  
Convention Committee Report: Chris Chavous has stepped down as Chair of the Convention Committee. Bill and Amanda Wilson will serve as Co-Chairs. Members will be appointed and those who were already serving on the committee can continue to do so. Feel free to contact the Co-Chairs if you want to help.   
  
Public Relations Report:     
     Jae Cosby is no longer with us. Bill would like to keep the Public Relations separate from the Digest and Technology committee. Marketing and Mass Media are tools in promoting our convention, so if you have an interest in PR, please give Bill a call. Since the broader aspect of PR is to let the general blind and public community know who GCB is, you don't have to be a member of GCB. So if you know any media experts, news reporter or anyone of that nature, recruit them as advisory consultants. Kim wondered if there were any written guidelines to assist Amanda with planning a convention. There is information from the last 3 conventions and Bill is staying by Amanda's side.   
  
Technology/GCB Digest Report  
     1. Technology: the tech meeting report had been emailed out. Some of the goals for 2014 are to maintain the website, find ways to get more people to visit the website. Kudos to Jerrie along with assistance from Amanda on all the good information that can help a blind person in their daily living with the resource page. More photos, FaceBook updates and the GCB brochure in different formats that can easily be downloaded and passed out are upcoming additions. The technology committee is more than just computers, all kind of gadgets are up for discussion and taking a peek at. You may have some tech knowledge you can pass on.  Technology Committee meets the second Thursday of each month and all are invited.  
     (2) GCB Digest: The Digest is currently being edited, and it contains interviews from people around the state and chapter news and announcements. Amanda welcomes all suggestions and help you are willing to share.   
  
Membership Committee Report: Amanda had emailed the membership out. She reported during the board meeting that they are working on ways to recruit new members, once we have them using them to retain them, and social activities, picnics, parties, etc. Future pursuits include talking to colleges and vision teachers.  
  
President/Legislative Report:   
     (1) President Report; Bill started with the fact that we are coming up on an election year. GCB has grown and changed a lot over the past few years. There may not be a whole lot of people participating in the discussions but we are communicating more, especially using the committee structure. The nominating committee is made up of three people who love and care about continuity and livelihood of GCB; Bill Holley (chair), Marsha Farrow and Tim Kelly. They will be having ongoing discussions on which persons will make good GCB leaders. They will be accepting calls and suggestions on finding GCB’s next leaders starting now. Marsha is interested in hearing from individuals who would like to serve GCB. Marsha suggested that as a preliminary action of the nominating committee that all individuals who are interested in serving on the board, regardless of whether or not they are currently on the board, submit their credentials and what they feel they can bring to the board be put on a section on the website prior to the April board meeting so the membership can see who thinks they can serve GCB, and Bill agreed. As the Constitution currently stands, all positions except secretary and treasurer terms are up this year.      
     (2) Legislative: Bill would like for Marsha to co-chair with legislative matters. Bill feels that we need to be on top of what is going on with funding, not just for the blind but disability as a whole since legislators aren't dividing up the different disabilities but treating us as a whole. Marsha (GYRA board member) stated that they (GYRA) are doing everything in their power to make changes for the better, we must remember they are a board not a dictatorship.  Marsha stated the one of the biggest problems is people aren't talking enough. They are not talking to their legislators or telling anyone their stories on what's going on in their lives. Who can tell your story better than you? Nobody that's who. Alice spoke up and stated HB18, the Braille Literacy bill which is coming up on the legislative calendar. Alice will send the secretary information on the bill and if possible she will let us know when it is coming up.   
  
Old Business: There was none.  
  
New Business: Chattooga has officially closed, Jerrie has sent Chattooga a letter about closing, Jerrie and Marsha will get together and handle all the workings of closing Chattooga.   
  
Announcements: Amanda stated that hopefully the Al Camp Scholarship Concert will take place June 7 in Rome, all help is invited. Marsha stated that when they get a little more ground work done they will send flyers and other information to the central office so it can be broadly distributed.   
  
Greg is able to coordinate a Fun Day of beepball with NFB, the welcome center in Macon and says we can use the field that they use in filming the Hank Aaron movie. He will send the information to the central office so it can be broadly distributed.   
  
After a prodding from the President about the board getting sleepy, Greg McDuffie motioned that we go ahead and call this meeting out, Judy Presley seconded, and the board carried the motion.   
  
Respectfully submitted,   
Robin Oliver, GCB Secretary  
  
\*\*you will receive minutes again with the April 19 Board Meeting info, any changes, corrections let me know and they will appear in these minutes. Continue to enjoy your blessings, Robin

**GCB Treasurer Report**

Assets: Expenses:

Contributions\Grants $9,090.81 GCB Digest:

Scholarship Acct 5387 $4,012.18 $249.22 Supplies/brailing

BOA Acct 6067 $11,419.72

9 MO RISK FREE CD $11,348.46 Office Supplies:

Net Asset for Quarter $428.00 $13.37 \*FedEx

Total: $36,299.17 $16.04 supplies

$18.05 supplies

Way Financial Portfolio: $70,515.14 $19.99 supplies

$12.35 supplies

Total: $79.80

Operating Costs:

$29.95 Bank Service Fee

$50.00 Secretary of State Fees

$174.12 GCB Phone Numbers

$711.00 American Council

$316.00 Grimes Insurance

Total: $1,281.07

Total Expenses: for Quarter $1,610.09

Total: $1,281.07

**GCB Chapter News**

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| --- |
| Athens Chapter*President,* Daniel Myers Contact Phone: 706-850-7472 Athens Council of the Blind Tentative Calendar for 2014: Athens Council of the Blind Meetings and Events: Sat. July 26th-Athens Council of the Blind Picnic to be held at the First Presbyterian Church, 185 E. Hancock Ave., Athens, Georgia 30601. Please R.S.V.P. Jamaica Miller at 706.316.9766 or email; [mai2@bellsouth.net](mailto:mai2@bellsouth.net).  Sat. Aug. 23rd-Athens Council of the Blind Meeting Multiple Choices 10:30 A.M. Sat. Sept. 27th-Athens Council of the Blind Meeting via Telephone 530.881.1000 PIN 463476# Sat. Oct. 25th-Athens Council of the Blind Meeting Multiple Choices 10:30 A.M. Sat. Nov. 22nd-Athens Council of the Blind Meeting via Telephone 530.881.1000 PIN 463476# Dec.-Christmas Meal-Date and Time TBA. MULTIPLEchoices is located at 145 Barrington Drive, Athens, GA. 30605. Augusta Chapter *President,* Christopher Chavous  Contact Phone: (706) 737-4341 EMail: [cccmayo@yahoo.com](mailto:cccmayo@yahoo.com) *Board of Directors:* Keith Morris, Alicia Morris and Dave Everly Meeting Place:  Meetings are held at the Columbia County Main Library, Evans Town Center Blvd, Evans, GA., on the second Saturday at 1:00. For more information, please contact Chris Chavous at (706) 737-4341.  We, the Augusta Chapter, would like to invite you to the 2014 Georgia Council of the Blind Three Day convention.  We will have our opening ceremony on August 1st at 5:00.  Mayor Deke Copenhaver will be our special guest and will present a Proclamation to the Georgia Council of the Blind.  We will also have our Welcome Reception on this night where our food theme will be Italian.  Come and Enjoy!!!  This year we will have a one mile walk.  The City of Augusta has agreed to let us use their Riverwalk for this Fundraiser.  The walk will begin at 7:00 AM on Saturday, so get a good night’s rest and get up the next morning put on your walking shoes and come and join us. There will be a $5.00 registration fee for participants. Also, we have a limited amount of t-shirts which can be purchased for $5.00 each.  As you all know we will be having a Live Auction. Augusta, Georgia is known as the Garden City so the Augusta Chapter basket is Garden themed. Each chapter will be donating a basket and we do not think any basket will be a letdown. So bring your money and let’s have a great time.  We would like you to help us get the word out. The more we get the word out the more people will know about the Georgia Council of the Blind. So please, spread the word.  Once you visit Augusta in August make plans to come back October 4th and be a part of our Annual Picnic. Looking forward to having you in our great city!!!East Georgia Chapter*President,* Christina O'Brien  Contact Phone: (678) 425-2447 EMail: [jcbethga@windstream.net](mailto:jcbethga@windstream.net)  Meeting Place: Chapter meetings are held the second Saturday of each month in Conyers. Please contact President Christina O'Brien at (678) 425-2447.Greater Columbus Chapter *President,* Gregory McDuffie Contact Phone: (706) 330-8185 Email: [gregory.mcduffie@yahoo.com](mailto:gregory.mcduffie@yahoo.com) *Meeting Place: The Columbus chapter meetings are held the third Friday of each month at the Columbus Public Library, 3000 Macon Road, from 10:30AM-12PM.*Greater Hall County Chapter*President,* Richard Bagley Contact Phone: (770) 983-1213 EMail: richardbagley@bellsouth.net Meeting Place: The meetings are held at the Smokey Springs Retirement Residence, which is located at 940 South Enota Drive in Gainesville, Georgia, on the second Saturday of the month. Contact Phone: (770) 531-2500 Our chapter has had a busy winter and spring series of meetings through May.  We concluded our meetings for the summer with our June meeting on Saturday, June 14.  This meeting is our annual picnic meeting and we will picnic at Luna’s restaurant in Gainesville, GA. We do not meet in July and August, resuming our regular meetings on the 2nd Saturday in September. One of our Charter chapter members and Charter chapter president is leaving and relocating to Savannah, GA to take another position. Bob McGarry was also Executive Director of the Disability Resource Center in Gainesville.  We wish him the best and he will be sorely missed. Our regards to all the other chapters and hope you have a good summer.  Submitted by Richard Bagley Northwest Georgia Chapter*President,* Ron Burgess Contact Phone: (706) 638-1132  Meeting Place: Chapter meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every other month at the Bank of Lafayette Community room, 104 North Main Street, Lafayette GA 30728. The meetings are held at 7:00 PM. For further information, please contact President Ron Burgess at (706) 638-1132.   Savannah Chapter*President,* Kim Harrison Contact Phone: (912) 228-1190  Meeting Place: The chapter meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 6:00 pm in the conference room of J. C. Lewis Ford, 9505 Abercorn St. in Savannah.[ccmayo@yahoo.com](mailto:ccmayo@yahoo.com) |

**Metro Atlanta Chapter of GCB** *President,* Brent Reynolds  
Contact Phone: (404) 814-0768  
Meeting Place: The chapter meetings are held the second Friday of each month from 4:30pm to 7:00 p.m. The meeting place is the Picadilly Cafeteria which is located on 2226 North Druid Hills Road, from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 P.M. For more information, please call President **Brent Reynolds at (404) 814-0768** The Metro Atlanta Chapter of GCB continues to meet the second Friday night at Pick-A-Dili Restaurant on North Druid Hills Road in Atlanta from 4:30 until 7:00.  Everyone is welcome to come and visit the chapter members on those meeting times.

Members are in the process of making up a basket to be bid on at the GCB State Conference/Convention in Augusta this August.

One of the chapter's faithful members, Barbara Graham, recently had a fall which fractured her back, and she has been having some help with physical therapy and home health care.  She would appreciate prayers.

For more information about the chapter, Contact President Brent Reynolds at (404) 814-0768.

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For more information about the chapter, Contact President Brent Reynolds at (404) 814-0768.

# Rome-Floyd County Chapter *President,* Amanda Wilson Contact Phone: (770) 547-4700 Meeting Place: The meetings are held at 11:00 AM in the Etowah Room of the Rome library, usually on the 3rd Tuesday. For further information, please contact Phillip Dillard at (770) 748-8629

**Georgia Blind Lions**

Building Bridges

Anne Wheeler

Who or what is this group called the Blind Lions of Georgia? How was it formed and why? What does it do? Can it help me, you ask. How can a person become a part of it? All of these questions are questions I desire to answer for you. So here goes…

Blind Lions of Georgia used to be called the Georgia Council of Blind Lions. It was started when J.C. Coe field had the vision of creating an entity which could bridge the gap between the blind community and the sighted members of Lions clubs. The Blind Lions as a group started with only a handful of people and now has as many as 40 members. There are more people out there who are potential members and we want to hear from you. Don’t worry. We do not collect dues for the blind Lions because every member already pays dues to their separate Lions club. We have members from all over the state of Georgia. Lions divide the state into four districts, district L the top left part of the state, District I, the top right part, District O the bottom left and District N the bottom right. Anyone can join us as long as that person is visually impaired and is a member in good standing of a Lions club in Georgia. Right now, there are more members in District I. One of the reasons for this is the Athens Heritage Lions club which has many blind and visually impaired members. Throughout Georgia, most Lions clubs are not actively looking for blind and visually impaired folks to invite. We want to change that.

We have been around awhile. We were originally affiliated with the American Council of Blind Lions, and we started with only a couple of members. We’ve grown and our mission to help Lions clubs find us and to help us become good Lions is working. (Us being the blind community) One of the reasons why we will continue to grow is because we have great new leaders. Sonia Saylor from Pooler, Georgia is the current president. She attended the Lions Camp for the Blind in Waycross this summer. Don’t tell anyone, but she gave herself the job of assessing the quality of experience she would find there. She wanted to report back to her Lions club and give constructive advice on changes which may be needed. She came away with a very positive analysis of services there and only had to mention some small things where the staff could improve. With this first camping experience she came away with a renewed commitment toward becoming independent and strong. She wants the Blind Lions to be an integral part of the Lions organization, and she wants the group to help Lions clubs grow in understanding and knowledge about the blind. At the camp, she met other Lions members and together they brainstormed how this group can build a bridge between Lions and the blind.

She feels that good communication is one of the most important goals to work toward. After all, Blind Lions are scattered all over the state and do not meet as a group but once a year at the state convention. She says, “We have to talk to one another to build confidence in ourselves and impart that to others.” With her background in Human Resources she will be a great leader.

Vice President is Brian Donegan. If you want to know all about how important the Lions Camp for the Blind is, just ask Brian. He has attended the camp many times growing up and now as an adult. He talks about how he would not be the person he is today if it were not for his camping experiences. Britain has been an ambassador for the blind as he travels to various Lions clubs across Georgia to speak about the importance of supporting the Camp. He is a great speaker and has a way of showing the sighted Lions members that a blind person is a real person and a happy, productive one at that. He is helping to break down stereotypes about the blind, and he is showing Lions clubs it would be advantageous to go out and find Lions members in the blind community.

Jerrie Toney is our new Secretary. We have all observed how well she has worked with the Georgia Council of the Blind. Her work ethic and her computer skills will combine to keep the Blind Lions in contact with one another. We are also using Robin Oliver in an extremely important role. She is the “Tail Twister.” In the Lions organization, the tail twister’s job is to keep a meeting focused on the positive, to encourage fun and to collect funds as fines from members. Everyone enjoys the antics of the tail twister, and I’m told that Robin is gifted in this area.

I hope this article helps you understand what the Blind Lions are. We were first called The Georgia Council of Blind Lions and after several years dropped our affiliation with the Council in order to expand our membership pool. As the name implies, it is a group of blind or visually impaired folks who are also members of Lions clubs across Georgia. The Blind Lions are actively searching for anyone who fits into both of these categories, both blind and a Lions members. We are joining forces, so to speak. To work toward a specific goal. And what is that goal? Simply to Build a Bridge.

First and foremost, it is to help the sighted Lions club members to search for, accept, and promote individuals in the blind community and help them become productive Lions members. Helen Keller asked the Lions to become her “Knights of the Blind in the Crusade against Darkness.” With that mission in mind and with the motto “We Serve” Lions clubs have grown to be the largest service organization in the world. Why shouldn’t the blind be asked to be a part of that mission? Most members of Lions clubs are sighted and, quite frankly, hesitant to approach a blind person. We cannot let them rest in that rut. The Georgia Council of the Blind, the National Federation of the Blind. Blind Veterans, any other organization which serves the blind, just plain blind and visually impaired people . . . we can work with Lions clubs to fight against darkness and prejudice and stereotypes. You have the picture. What are Lions clubs thinking if they do not include the blind community? What are the blind thinking if they do not care what the Lions Clubs do and how they do it?

We are the link. We are the builders of bridges. We are the Blind Lions of Georgia. If you want to be a part of this active, forward thinking group just give one of us a call. If you want to join a Lions club just ask us how to do that. Honestly, every club does not have blind members, but if the current Blind Lions of Georgia members have their way, Lions clubs will be full of us very soon. Here are two numbers where you can reach us:

Sonia Saylor, 912-228-2150

**Anne Wheeler 770-786-5778**

# Georgia Statewide Coalition on Blindness

This article summarizes the Georgia Statewide Coalition on Blindness Spring 2014 Meeting that was held in Savannah. We met at the Savannah Center for Blind and Low Vision.  The moderators were Debbie McDonald & Mark Gasaway.  Vashaun Jones addressed the state of the Coalition.  The following providers had updates: Brian Mosley, Walton Options; Elaine Byron, Savannah Center for Blind and Low Vision and Pat Herndon, Georgia Library Services.

One of the sponsors Larry Lake of Low Vision International demonstrated products. The first device demonstrated was the Magna Link; this device is specifically designed for low vision users.  Some nice features are Portability and Connects to both a Mac and PC. The second device demonstrated was The Voice, a stand-alone reading machine which was designed for blind users. If you would like further information about these devices contact Low Vision International or visit their web site at [www.lviamerica.com](http://www.lviamerica.com/).

We heard from the following speakers.  Dr. Chad Reese, from the Chatham Area Transit, Anthony Stephens, Public Policy Advocacy Manager, National Industries for the Blind, Shanti Aaron, VR-SSA Employment Support Manager, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, Kim Wagner, Blindness Services, Jim Downs, Program Manager, Georgia Instructional Materials Center (GIMC), Zell Murray, Manager, Smokey Powell Assistive Technology Center, Toni Prahl, Manager, Smokey Powell Assistive Technology Center, John Glisson, Outreach Manager for GAUIAS (Georgia Audible Universal Information Access Service).

There was a Presentation by Ellen Rolader, Georgia Outreach Coordinator from Hamilton Relay. This is a phone company that provides Relay Services to anyone who is deaf, hard of hearing or has trouble speaking on the phone.  The three services provided are TTY, Video Relay and Captel Service; these services are free of charge.  She is also involved with an equipment distribution program called iCanConnect.  This is an equipment distribution program that distributes CCTV’s, iPads and much more.  This service is available to individuals who have a dual sensory loss.

There was a Discussion on the Closing of the Sub Regional Libraries; Pat Herndon, Director, GLASS, Georgia Libraries for Accessible Statewide Services and Susan Whittle, Director, SW GLASS, Georgia Libraries for Accessible Statewide Services, presented their arguments.  This year, the Governor's office asked the National Library Service to take a look at their budget and make cuts.  It was decided to centralize services in the state library service to Atlanta.

The next 2014 Fall Georgia Statewide Coalition on Blindness convention will be held Friday, November 7th and Saturday, November 8th at the Center for the Visually Impaired, located at 739 W. Peachtree St. in Atlanta.

**Georgia Council of the Blind State Conference/Convention**

Conference /Convention Description

July 31 – August 3, 2014

**Registration Information**

Registration for the Conference/Convention is available on line at the GCB Website (georgiacounciloftheblind.org). The cost of registration for the pre-conference workshop is $50.00. If you are registering for the conference/convention and the pre-conference workshop the cost is $95.00 for GCB members and $100.00 for non members. If you want to register for the conference/convention only the cost is 55.00 for members and $60.00 for non members. A reception with meal is included in the cost for individuals who register for the conference/convention. The GCB Banquet which includes a meal is an additional cost of $50.00. You may register at the door for these events. On July 31, 2014 the registration fee for the conference convention will increase to $60.00 for members and $65.00 for non members. However, if you wish to attend the Banquet you must register for the meal no later than July 25, 2014. No cash or personal checks will be collected at the door. You will be required to pay through pay pal or certified check/money order at the door.

Thursday July 31, 2014 – Registration 4:00–6:00 PM

Friday August 1, 2014 – Registration 8:00AM- 12:00PM

Saturday August 2, 2014 – Registration 8:00AM- 12:00PM

**Hotel Information**

Contact the Augusta Marriott Hotel and Suites at Two Tenth Street, Augusta, Georgia 30901 (706) 722-8900. Please inform hotel reservationist you are attending the GCB Conference/ convention.

**August 1, 2014**

**Pre-Conference Information**

The Pre-Conference Session provides 2 hours of detailed instruction by an experienced farmer and grower. Starting with examples of quality dirt, sandy soil, clay and compost, conference participants will have time to examine and feel the texture of soil and learn about the composition of soil biota, beneficial insects, crop rotation as a means of pest control, the importance of seed selection, business planning and marketing, and leading edge ideas about permaculture, urban agriculture and self-sustainability. Cost: $50 per person Time: 12:15 PM – 3:00 PM

**Opening of Conference/Convention and Reception**

The GCB Conference/Convention will officially come to order with opening remarks by the GCB President and presenting of the colors by the Blind Veterans Association color guards. Opening marks by Lions District Governor host of the evening events. The Mayor of Augusta will present a proclamation to GCB for their services to the Blind Communities in the state of Georgia. The Georgia Council of the Blind Affiliate Presidents will present awards and certificates to member of their local chapters for community services. The reception will start immediately following the presentation of the chapter awards ceremony. The Conference/Convention Opening Session and Reception is scheduled from 5:30-8:00 PM.

**August 2, 2014**

**River Walk and Roll Fundraiser**

The GCB will host a River Walk and Roll Fundraiser is open to the general public participation. The intent of the River Walk and Roll is to bring attention to the general public about the abilities of individuals with different abilities. We will ask our supporters to make a donation of not less than $5.00 to participate in this event. T shirts will be available for a fee of $7.00 upon request. If you are requesting a specific sizes T shirt please order your shirt in advance and depending on the size the cost could increase (example 2X- and up). River Walk and Roll is scheduled from 7:00-8:00 AM.

**Plenary Session and Panel Discussion**

The GCB will introduce the moderator and speaker for the plenary session. The plenary session will focus on the GCB Community/ Together Reaching Beyond Ourselves. This theme was selected to provide opportunities for individuals with different abilities to work together toward a common goal. GCB selected employment of people with different abilities as a common goal. Our panel is made up of representatives who will focus on the collaborating of efforts to identify self-employment opportunities. Organizations/ agencies represented: Vocational Rehabilitation, Micro Enterprise (G Men), Veterans Administration, Blind Coalition/Employer (Fedora Outlier), Parent to Parent of Georgia, Georgia Library for Accessible Statewide Services etc. Session 9-10:30 am

**Breakout Discussion Groups**

1. Owning/operating my business as a differently able person
2. Micro Enterprise model for developing your own business.
3. Transitioning from school/home to self employment.
4. Reasonable accommodations and self employment
5. TBA

* Discussion group topics are subject to change base on the outcome of the Plenary Session.

**Workshop: Micro Enterprise Program**

The Multiple Choices Center for Independent Living, Inc, Micro Enterprise Program will demonstrate a successful piloted project “Good Roots”.

The Good Roots Project Goal: to form a cooperative of home-based organic seedling growers creating IO new jobs in the target area of Northeast Georgia and, thereby, increase the involvement in community gardens of underserved people, targeting those with disabilities. Multiple Choices Center for Independent Living, Inc. and the Athens Land Trust, Inc. propose a collaborative project to investigate the feasibility of establishing a cooperative of organic seedling growers and operating a dispersed growing system of home-based seedling beds.

The project accomplished the six objectives:

1. form a cooperative of underserved individuals, targeting those with significant disabilities,
   1. train those individuals in the functions and management of a horticultural cooperative and organic seedling production,
   2. design and implement a system of organic seedling beds distributed among the individuals' homes,
   3. select which seedlings would best fit a distributed growth system, targeting seedlings to be provided to community gardens and private gardeners,
   4. document grant activities for reporting purposes.
   5. And create a documentary on the piloted project.

**Banquet/Awards Ceremony**

The GCB awards ceremony will recognize individual members and scholarship recipients at the banquet. Additionally, a keynote speaker will summarize our convention events and give our attendees an understanding of where we are on meeting our goal for this convention. We will begin seating guest at 5:30 PM. The cost for this event is $50.00 per person.

**Entertainment**

The GCB is having an evening of fun immediately following the banquet. Bring your dancing shoes or voices and get ready for a good time.

**August 3, 2014**

**Necrology Service**

The necrology service is a program to provide GCB member to acknowledge individuals whom passed away over the last year.

Service starts at 8:00 AM

**Business meeting/ officer elections**

GCB business meeting and election of officers will start at 9:00 AM.

**Convention Closing and Board Meeting**

Officially adjourn the convention and conduct Board meeting by 11:00 AM.

# to information about