# National Federation of the Blind of Michigan

# The Informant 2023

**Vol. 3:** Just Where Have You Been?

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Robert Parsons, Jr., M. A., CRC, CVRT, LLC

## From the President:

The NFB of Michigan has been active in various areas in the realm of advocacy, fundraising, community engagement, and membership development. Our state committees, which meet virtually monthly, encourage interested members to join and contribute ideas to the important work they do.

## Some committee updates this month include:

* The Legislative and Advocacy Committee has been busy planning an exciting opportunity for our members across the state to advocate for issues of great importance to us. Our first Lansing Gathering, to be held Tuesday, September 19, will be an opportunity for you and your fellow chapter or division members to advocate for your elected officials in the state capital. For more information about this opportunity or to join our committee, contact JJ Meddaugh at vp@nfbmi.org.
* The communications committee held an energetic meeting on August 4 covering the process for registering for the local and statewide email list serves. As a reminder, all chapters and division announcements are posted to the NFBMI Talk list by their elected board or officer. For information about our committee meetings or to join, contact Ather Jammoa at Atherjammoa@yahoo.com.
* The fundraising committee is excited to announce that our state affiliate will be returning with its popular “White Cane Winners” virtual auction. Hosted on the 32 Auctions online platform in celebration of Blind Equality Achievement Month, our affiliate has already begun accepting donations for potential auction items. If you have an item, you believe would be helpful for building this Federation program or would like to join the fundraising committee, please contact Mark Eagle, affiliate treasurer, at treasurer@nfbmi.org.

## Chapter and Division Updates:

Our local chapters and state divisions have actively been meeting and also provide the following updates for members:

* The At Large chapter has a reformed membership process to connect to our state membership committee and portal. If you are a current member of the At Large chapter or interested in becoming a member, please join us at our next meeting on August 17 at 8pm via Zoom. to learn more about how to update your membership status contact Robert Parsons at President@nfbmi.org.
* The New Wayne County chapter will be holding a picnic in Westland on September 2. For more information or to attend, please contact Donna Posont, Vice President.
* The Detroit chapter has been active in their advocacy efforts in the ongoing paratransit negotiations and eventual decision on a contractor that recognizes the rights and needs of blind people and others with disabilities. Check out this article where Detroit chapter president, Richard Clay, details his satisfaction with the efforts and success the riders have experienced: <https://www.axios.com/local/detroit/2023/08/04/foia-friday-detroit-new-paratransit-system>
* The Flint Genessee chapter’s advocacy efforts to provide accessibility to Flint’s downtown and cultural center has begun to manifest. Our students and volunteers at the NFBMI REAL program had a small preview of all Flint has to offer, but check out this article detailing the efforts of the accessible street crossings installed and the thoughts from our membership: <https://www.mlive.com/news/flint/2023/08/new-audible-crosswalks-will-help-make-downtown-flint-a-safer-more-inclusive-place.html>

I told you all we’ve been busy. I am so proud and excited at how active our members have been. This is only a brief description of all we’ve been up to. Want more about the Michigan affiliate? I hope so because you are all cordially invited to join us for the quarterly meeting of the board of directors of the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan, held via Zoom, on August 21 at 6:30pm. This meeting is open to all members of the NFB of Michigan and will provide important updates for members of our affiliate about:

* 2023 National Convention
* 2023 State Convention
* Blind Equality Achievement Month
* Our advocacy Efforts with BSBP

I look forward to speaking with you all on Monday. For questions, feel free to contact me at President@nfbmi.org.