

Fall 2010



# THE RHODODENDRON

## A PUBLICATION OF

MOUNTAIN STATE COUNCIL OF THE BLIND, INC

PO Box 2756  
Martinsburg, WV 25402  
[www.msbcwv.org](http://www.msbcwv.org)

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## President's Message

Dear MSCB Members and Friends,

As the new MSCB year begins, I would like to thank everyone who helped make my first year as president both a successful and fun one. I appreciate people's willingness to help improve the lives of blind and visually impaired individuals in West Virginia by serving on committees and assisting with projects. I also commend our local chapters for the continued advocacy work they are doing in their communities.

Since our last newsletter, I had the opportunity to attend the ACB national convention in Phoenix, AZ. The week was filled with exhibitors displaying the latest technology and gadgets to assist with daily living and healthcare; excellent speakers bringing us up-to-date on legislative issues and library services; and recreation activities.

Just a few weeks ago our state convention was held in Charleston. I want to thank the convention committee for their hard work in making it a successful and informative convention. (,see convention article later in this issue.) ,as

a result of hard work from our members, we have the possibility of gaining two new chapters. A group of blind veterans that meets in Martinsburg, and our members from the Charleston area are in the process of organizing their chapters.

Over the past three months, we have gotten several new members. I do want to take this opportunity to welcome them to MSCB. I would like to encourage you to participate in our monthly conference calls and join our email discussion list.

In closing, I want to encourage each of you to help make MSCB a stronger organization by serving on committees. A list of our committees follows this message. If you are interested in serving on any committees, please contact me by calling (304) 822-4679 or by email at [dandmbrown@atlanticbb.net](mailto:dandmbrown@atlanticbb.net).

Have a nice autumn.

Sincerely,

Donna Brown, MSCB  
President

### Committees:

Audio Description  
Awards  
Budget  
Bylaws

Convention  
Fundraising  
Legislative  
Membership

Publications  
Website

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Mountain State Council of  
the Blind  
Executive Officers  
And  
Board of directors

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- *Board of Directors*  
Kimberly Kleiman  
Josh Metz  
Glen Pinkard  
Donovan Wright

## Saint Lucy

### Patron of Blindness

Lucy's name means "light", with the same root as "lucid" which means "clear, radiant, understandable." Unfortunately for us, Lucy's history does not match her name. Shrouded in the darkness of time, all we really know for certain is that this brave [woman](#) who lived in [Syracuse](#) lost her [life](#) in the [persecution](#) of Christians in the early fourth century. Her veneration spread to [Rome](#) so that by the sixth century the whole Church recognized her courage in defense of the faith.

Because people wanted to shed light on Lucy's bravery, legends grew up. The one that is passed down to us tells the story of a young [Christian woman](#) who had vowed her [life](#) to the service of Christ. Her mother tried to arrange a marriage for her with a pagan. Lucy apparently knew that her mother would not be convinced by a young girl's vow so she devised a plan to convince her mother that



long illness was cured miraculously. The grateful mother was now ready to listen to Lucy's desire to give her money to the poor and commit her [life](#) to God. Unfortunately, legend has it, the rejected bridegroom did not see the same light and he betrayed Lucy to the governor as a Christian. This governor tried to send her into prostitution but the guards who came to take her way found her stiff and heavy as a

[Christ](#) was a much more powerful partner for life. Through [prayers](#) at the [tomb](#) of Saint Agatha, her mother's

mountain. Finally she was killed. As much as the facts of Lucy's specific case are unknown, we know that many Christians suffered incredible torture and a painful death for their [faith](#) during Diocletian's reign. Lucy may not have been burned or had a sword thrust through her throat but many Christians did and we can be sure her [faith](#) withstood tests we can barely imagine.

Lucy's name is probably also connected to statues of Lucy holding a dish with two eyes on it. This refers to another legend in which Lucy's eyes were put out by [Diocletian](#) as part of his torture. The legend concludes with [God](#) restoring Lucy's eyes.

Lucy's name also played a large part in naming Lucy as a patron saint of the blind and those with eye-trouble.

Information about Saint Lucy submitted by MSCB member Terri White

## Vandalia Chapter Update

Pedestrian safety and public transportation are hot topics in Morgantown these days. We recently learned of the Pedestrian Safety Board and intend to become involved to the greatest extent possible. A Pedestrian Safety Plan was approved by the Traffic Commission in January and a public forum was held with additional forums to be

announced in the future. We did not find out about the plan until after its approval but a great opportunity exists for our involvement with implementation.

What do you all say to an MSCB walk-a-thon fund raiser on our Rail Trail? Great time for such an event, don't you think? We'd love to do it in late spring or early summer but need

your help. We need to hear from you.

We meet the first Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at Shoney's for dinner and social hour with the business meeting to follow. Plans subject to change. Call Debbie at 304-599-4782 or Donovan at 304-290-9671 for information.

Submitted by,  
Debbie Cain

## Tri-County Scholarship

The Tri-County Chapter of Mountain State Council of the Blind presented the 2010 Cesarina Capriotti Wysong Memorial Scholarship to Dustin J. Thornton of Inwood, WV. Dustin is a 2010 graduate of Musselman High School and is enrolled full time in the Culinary Arts Program at Pierpont Community & Technical College in



Fairmont, WV. He is legally blind. Pictured with Dustin are Rosy Downs, friend of the late

Mrs. Wysong and Terry White, her sister-in-law, who presented the award. The event was held at War Memorial Park in Martinsburg during the Tri-County chapter's annual picnic.

NOTE: Since the writing of this article, Gerry Fitzpatrick and his wife Ana have become members of MSCB.

## July Meeting

The Tri-County chapter of Mountain State Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired met at Shoney's in Martinsburg for its July meeting. Guest speaker was Gerry Fitzpatrick, visually impaired veteran and VIST volunteer at the Martinsburg VA Center's support group for blind and visually impaired veterans. The two groups have agreed to work together for the

betterment of their members. Fitzpatrick presented MSCB with a certificate of appreciation and a Braille flag in recognition of their work throughout West Virginia serving the blind and visually impaired community.

From left are Gerry Fitzpatrick, Kathy Gerhardt, Kim Kleiman, Jessie Rayl with dog guide Angel, and John Birckhead.



## Legislative Update

October 8, 2010 was an important day for people living with disabilities. President Barack Obama signed into law the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Telecommunications and Video Accessibility Act. This culminates a long, difficult legislative battle. More work is to be done as the regulations to implement this legislation are crafted. With this signing, in a short time, accessing all of the features of

cable television systems will be possible. When there is an emergency we need to know about, the information, whether it be about a tornado, hazardous materials spill, flood etc, will be made accessible to us. We will have more choices in cell phones which will be accessible right out of the box. It won't be long before we will know what is going on in movies and TV shows thanks to

the provision of video description. Choices in cell phones which will all be hearing aid compatible will be available. Individuals who are deaf-blind will be able to purchase the telecommunications equipment they need in order to become less isolated, gain employment, and truly participate in American society.

TRI-COUNTY CHAPTER OF  
MOUNTAIN STATE COUNCIL OF THE BLIND  
UPDATE AND NEWS

Jessie L. Rayl President

In June, Tri-county linked up with Gerald Fitzpatrick who coordinates the local Blinded Veterans' group in Martinsburg. This group meets at the VA Center providing support, referral, information and advocacy to blinded veterans. Tri-county is honored to be working with such a distinguished group of America's most valuable citizens and we look forward to further development with these people. Mr. Fitzpatrick awarded TCMSCB an award depicting a Braille Flag at that meeting.

Our annual picnic in August at War Memorial Park brought an excellent turnout of members, family and friends. During the event, the Cesarina Wysong Scholarship was awarded to Dustin Thornton, a recently graduated senior from Berkeley County schools. Dustin will be attending Culinary School at Pierpont in Fairmont, West Virginia this fall. Congratulations, Dustin! Tri-county is honored to be able to award the 2<sup>nd</sup> scholarship in Mrs. Wysong's memory thanks to her family's and others' ongoing support and contributions.

In our September meeting, Kathy from PanTran bus System came to speak to our group about the recent

merge with Senior Center, and new additions to our system which increased services for all riders, especially those with Disabilities and users of demand-response. TCMSCB hopes to continue to work with PanTran for installation of Bus Stop signs in designated areas and to ensure continued compliance with Americans with Disabilities regulations continue. We have a dedicated staff at Pan-Tran and a great working relationship with them. For further information, call (304.263.0876).

In October, TCMSCB will, again, team up with the local VA support group to recognize National White Cane Safety day (October 15). There will be displays with information on white cane and dog guides, pedestrian safety, audible pedestrian signals and much more.

Other events in our near future: CPR / FirstAid training for our members, a Scentsy party and fund-Raiser of Scentsy products, Horses with Hearts presentation and our annual outstanding Christmas party in December.

For additional information about any TCMSCB events, questions or concerns, please contact: Jessie Rayl (304.671.9780); EM [thedogmom63@frontier.com](mailto:thedogmom63@frontier.com)

## Potomac Valley Chapter News

Greetings from Potomac Valley Chapter  
As most of us have had a hot, dry summer, we also have had a very exciting one in the chapter.  
In June PVC hosted an ice cream social for the students at the WWSB dormitory. Also that month Carol, Frank, Glen, Evelyn and Joe set up a booth at Keyser's Strawberry Festival. We had a lot of fun setting up, but torrential downpours caused us to leave early. We got a wonderful bath that day, even though we may not have needed it. We are looking forward to this event next year and clear skies.  
In July, we did not have our monthly meeting due to the holiday and vacations. On August 14th, we had our annual picnic at the home of Frank and Carol McGhee. Everyone brought food and their appetites.  
In September Donna, Dennis, Glen, Millie, Evelyn

and Joe set up a booth at Hampshire Fest in Romney. We distributed information about the chapter and MSCB, we sold various items, and we had a good time socializing with friends in the community. A special thanks to Chris Delawder, a friend of PVC, for coming and assisting us with the booth. The following weekend, 6 of our members attended the MSCB convention in Charleston, West Virginia. A special thanks to John McCoolle, who drove the van. See convention wrap up in this issue.  
As I am writing this, we are currently making plans to have our October meeting in Keyser, WV, at the home of Evelyn and Joe Cowatch. I hope everyone has a pleasant fall, a Happy Thanksgiving, and very little snow.

## 2010 CONVENTION REPORT



The convention began with a very informative and interactive student seminar. Four visually impaired students and two teachers of the visually impaired attended. Information was presented and discussions ensued on the following topics: research career paths, resources for developing resumes, and communicating with mentors; identifying and resolving conflict in school and social



situations; and the benefits of exercise for maintaining good health and relieving stress. Friday afternoon and evening, convention attendees had the opportunity to browse exhibits. The following exhibitors were present: Jack Wood from Win Tech demonstrated scanners and screen magnification equipment, John Morretto from En-Vision America showed the ID Mate Summit and the ScripTalk, and Linda Yost shared information about the Job Accommodation Network.

A very talented group of musicians from the Charleston area entertained us on Friday evening by playing Blue Grass and Southern Gospel music.

On Saturday morning four excellent speakers presented us with some



valuable and timely information. Chuck Huss from WVDRS updated us on the low vision driving program. Darren Burton from AFB Tech informed us of the process used for evaluating mainstream products and working with the companies to make them more accessible. He also demonstrated some cell phones and electronic book readers.



## 2010 CONVENTION REPORT

Marcia Springston, a potter who is blind, informed us of what is all involved in making her own pottery and selling it.

The final speaker of the morning was ACB President Mitch Pomerantz. He addressed the issue of "Is it discrimination, or is it just life"?

During lunch Sheri Koch from WVDRS updated us on the programs offered by WVDRS for blind and visually impaired individuals; David Allen, Principal of WWSB, reported on the status and programs at WVSDB; and Patrick Sheehan, Silver Spring, MD, informed us of the upcoming Mid-Atlantic conference and convention. During our business meeting on Saturday afternoon, many Bylaws were discussed. A more detailed report of the Bylaws changes will appear in future communications. In order to honor and

remember two longtime dedicated MSCB members who have passed on, the membership elected to establish the following funds: The Barbara Fierst Technology Fund and the Anna Hunt Scholarship Fund. Donations to these funds can be mailed to MSCB Treasurer Kathy Gerhardt. During our elections, Donovan Wright, Morgantown, was re-elected to the board, and Josh Metz, Morgantown, was elected for the other position.

ACB President Mitch Pomerantz, addressed the group during our banquet. This was followed by a fun and rather successful auction where we made a bit over \$1100. A post-Convention board meeting was held on Sunday morning.



## 25 Extinct Things

### 25 THINGS ABOUT TO BECOME EXTINCT IN AMERICA

Will this happen in our life time?

#### 25. U.S. Post Office

They are pricing themselves out of existence. With e-mail, and online services they are a relic of the past. (refer to #9) Packages are also sent faster and cheaper with UPS .

#### 24. Yellow Pages

This year will be pivotal for the global Yellow Pages industry. Much like newspapers, print Yellow Pages will continue to bleed dollars to their various digital counterparts, from Internet Yellow Pages (IYPs), to local search engines and combination search/listing services like Reach Local and Yodel Factors like 20 an acceleration of the print 'fade rate' and the looming recession will contribute to the onslaught. One research firm predicts the falloff in usage of newspapers and print Yellow Pages could even reach 10% this year -- much higher than the 2%-3% fade rate seen in past years.

#### 23. Classified Ads

The Internet has made so many things obsolete that newspaper classified ads might sound like just another trivial item on a long list. But this is one of those harbingers of the future that could signal the end of civilization as we know it. The argument is that if newspaper classifieds are replaced by free online listings at sites like Craigslist.org <<http://craigslist.org/>> and Google Base, then newspapers are not far behind them..

#### 22. Movie Rental Stores

While Netflix is looking up at the moment, Blockbuster keeps closing store locations by the hundreds. It still has about 6,000 left across the world, but those keep dwindling and the stock is down considerably in 2008, especially since the company gave up a quest of Circuit City .. Movie Gallery, which owned the Hollywood Video brand, closed up shop earlier this year.. Countless small video chains and mom-and-pop stores have given up the ghost already.

#### 21. Dial-up Internet Access

Dial-up connections have fallen from 40%

in 2001 to 10% in 2008. The combination of an infrastructure to accommodate affordable high speed Internet connections and the disappearing home phone have all but pounded the final nail in the coffin of dial-up Internet access.

#### 20. Phone Land Lines

According to a survey from the National Center for Health Statistics, at the end of 2007, nearly one in six homes was cell-only and, of those homes that had land lines, one in eight only received calls on their cells.

#### 19. Chesapeake Bay Blue Crabs

Maryland 's icon, the blue crab, has been fading away in Chesapeake Bay . Last year Maryland saw the lowest harvest (22 million pounds) since 1945. Just four decades ago the bay produced 96 million pounds. The population is down 70% since 1990, when they first did a formal count. There are only about 120 million crabs in the bay and they think they need 200 million for a sustainable population. Over-fishing, pollution, invasive species and global warming get the blame.

#### 18. VCRs

For the better part of three decades, the VCR was a best-seller and staple in every American household until being completely decimated by the DVD , and now the Digital Video Recorder (DVR). In fact, the only remnants of the VHS age at your local Wal-Mart or Radio Shack are blank VHS tapes these days. Pre-recorded VHS tapes are largely gone and VHS decks are practically nowhere to be found. They served us so well.

#### 17. Ash Trees

In the late 1990's, a pretty, iridescent green species of beetle, now known as the emerald ash borer, hitched a ride to North America with ash wood products imported from eastern Asia In less than a decade, its larvae have killed millions of trees in the Midwest , and continue to spread. They've killed more than 30 million ash trees in southeastern Michigan alone, with tens of millions more lost in Ohio and Indiana . More than 75 billion

trees are currently at risk.

#### 16. Ham Radio

Amateur radio operators enjoy personal (and often worldwide) wireless communications with each other and are able to support their communities with emergency and disaster communications if necessary, while increasing their personal knowledge of electronics and radio theory. However, proliferation of the Internet and its popularity among youth has caused the decline of amateur radio. In the past five years alone, the number of people holding active ham radio licenses has dropped by 50,000, even though Morse Code is no longer a requirement.

#### 15. The Swimming Hole

Thanks to our litigious society, swimming holes are becoming a thing of the past. '20/20' reports that swimming hole owners, like Robert Every in High Falls, NY, are shutting them down out of worry that if someone gets hurt they'll sue. And that's exactly what happened in Seattle . The city of Bellingham was sued by Katie Hofstetter who was paralyzed in a fall at a popular swimming hole in Whatcom Falls Park .. As injuries occur and lawsuits follow, expect more swimming holes to post 'Keep out!' signs.

#### 14. Answering Machines

The increasing disappearance of answering machines is directly tied to No 20 our list -- the decline of landlines. According to USA Today, the number of homes that only use cell phones jumped 159% between 2004 and 2007. It has been particularly bad in New York ; since 2000, landline usage has dropped 55%. It's logical that as cell phones rise, many of them replacing traditional landlines, that there will be fewer answering machines.

#### 13. Cameras That Use Film

It doesn't require a statistician to prove the rapid disappearance of the film camera in America .. Just look to companies like Nikon, the professional's choice for quality camera equipment. In 2006, it announced that it would stop making film cameras, pointing to the shrinking market -- only 3% of its sales in 2005, compared to 75% of sales from digital cameras and equipment.

(continued on next page)

ash

## 25 Extinct Things (Continued)

### 12. Incandescent Bulbs

Before a few years ago, the standard 60-watt (or, yikes, 100-watt) bulb was the mainstay of every U.S. home. With the green movement and all-things-sustainable-energy crowd, the Compact Fluorescent Light bulb (CFL) is largely replacing the older, Edison-era incandescent bulb. The EPA reports that 2007 sales for Energy Star CFLs nearly doubled from 2006, and these sales accounted for approximately 20 percent of the U.S. light bulb market. And according to USA Today, a new energy bill plans to phase out incandescent bulbs in the next four to 12 years.

### 11. Stand-Alone Bowling Alleys

**Bowling Balls.** US claims there are still 60 million Americans who bowl at least once a year, but many are not bowling in stand-alone bowling alleys. Today most new bowling alleys are part of facilities for all types or recreation including laser tag, go-karts, bumper cars, video game arcades, climbing walls and glow miniature golf. Bowling lanes also have been added to many non-traditional venues such as adult communities, hotels and resorts, and gambling casinos.

### 10. The Milkman

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in 1950, over half of the milk delivered was to the home in quart bottles, by 1963, it was about a third and by 2001, it represented only 0.4% percent. Nowadays most milk is sold through supermarkets in gallon jugs. The steady decline in home-delivered milk is blamed, of course, on the rise of the supermarket, better home refrigeration and longer-lasting milk. Although some milkmen still make the rounds in pockets of the U.S., they are certainly a dying breed..

### 9. Hand-Written Letters

In 2006, the Radicati Group estimated that, worldwide, 183 billion e-mails were sent each day.. Two million each second. By November of 2007, an estimated 3.3 billion Earthlings owned cell phones, and 80% of the world's population had access to cell phone coverage. In 2004, half-a-trillion text messages were sent, and the number has no doubt increased exponentially since then. So where amongst this gorge of gab-

ble is there room for the elegant, polite hand-written letter?

### 8. Wild Horses

It is estimated that 100 years ago, as many as two million horses were roaming free within the United States. In 2001, National Geographic News estimated that the wild horse population has decreased to about 50,000 head. Currently, the National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory board states that there are 32,000 free roaming horses in ten Western states, with half of them residing in Nevada ... The Bureau of Land Management is seeking to reduce the total number of free range horses to 27,000, possibly by selective euthanasia.

### 7. Personal Checks

According to an American Bankers Assoc. report, a net 23% of consumers plan to decrease their use of checks over the next two years, while a net 14% plan to increase their use of PIN debit. Bill payment remains the last stronghold of paper-based payments -- for the time being. Checks continue to be the most commonly used bill payment method, with 71% of consumers paying at least one recurring bill per month by writing a check. However, a bill-by-bill basis, checks account for only 49% of consumers' recurring bill payments (down from 72% in 2001 and 60% in 2003).

### 6. Drive-in Theaters

During the peak in 1958, there were more than 4,000 drive-in theaters in this country, but in 2007 only 405 drive-ins were still operating. Exactly zero new drive-ins have been built since 2005. Only one reopened in 2005 and five reopened in 2006, so there isn't much of a movement toward reviving the closed ones.

### 5. Mumps & Measles

Despite what's been in the news lately, the measles and mumps actually, truly are disappearing from the United States. In 1964, 212,000 cases of mumps were reported in the U.S. By 1983, this figure had dropped to 3,000, thanks to a vigorous vaccination program. Prior to the introduction of the measles vaccine, approximately half a million cases of measles were reported in the U.S. annually, resulting in 450 deaths. In

2005, only 66 cases were recorded.

### 4. Honey Bees

Perhaps nothing on our list of disappearing America is so dire; plummeting so enormously; and so necessary to the survival of our food supply as the honey bee. Very scary. 'Colony Collapse Disorder,' or CCD, has spread throughout the U.S. and Europe over the past few years, wiping out 50% to 90% of the colonies of many beekeepers -- and along with it, their livelihood.

### 3. News Magazines and TV News

While the TV evening newscasts haven't gone anywhere over the last several decades, their audiences have. In 1984, in a story about the diminishing returns of the evening news, the New York Times reported that all three network evening-news programs combined had only 40.9 million viewers. Fast forward to 2008, and what they have today is half that.

### 2. Analog TV

According to the Consumer Electronics Association, 85% of homes in the U.S. get their television programming through cable or satellite providers. For the remaining 15% -- or 13 million individuals -- who are using rabbit ears or a large outdoor antenna to get their local stations, change is in the air. If you are one of these people you'll need to get a new TV or a converter box in order to get the new stations which will only be broadcast in digital..

### 1. The Family Farm

Since the 1930's, the number of family farms has been declining rapidly. According to the USDA, 5.3 million farms dotted the nation in 1950, but this number had declined to 2.1 million by the 2003 farm census (data from the 2007 census is just now being published). Ninety-one percent of the U.S. FARMS are small Family Farms.

Both interesting and saddening, isn't it?

MOUNTAIN STATE COUNCIL OF THE BLIND, INC  
PO Box 2756  
Martinsburg, WV 25402  
www.msbcwv.org  
2010 Membership Form

Please feel free to make extra copies to share with others.

Please return this form to your local chapter contact, to Kathy Gerhardt, MSCB Treasurer, 97 Stoney Lick Road, Martinsburg, WV 25403-1881 or email to [kathygerhardt@wildblue.net](mailto:kathygerhardt@wildblue.net). Call Donna Brown, MSCB President, at 304-822-4679 or Kathy at 304-754-6885 for questions or information.

Please Print:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS (street): \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

I LIVE IN \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

**PREFERRED FORMAT:** (indicate 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> choice)

\_\_\_ Braille, \_\_\_ email, \_\_\_ large print, \_\_\_ cassette

I am: \_\_\_ blind, \_\_\_ visually impaired, \_\_\_ sighted

**Please check all that apply:**

MSCB Dues: \$10.00

Local Chapter Dues: \$5.00

Potomac Valley Chapter (Romney and area)

Tri-County Chapter (Eastern Panhandle area)

Vandalia Chapter (Morgantown and area)

MSCB Junior Member (12 to 18): \$5.00

Junior Member Local Chapter: \$2.50

Organization Support: \$25.00

Donations (please specify): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

MSCB is an IRS 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Donations are tax deductible.

**TOTAL AMOUNT:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check or money order payable to MSCB and return as indicated above.

We also accept payment through Paypal at [www.msbcwv.org](http://www.msbcwv.org).

Would you like to be included in our members-only (information not released) directory? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

If you'd like to be contacted by one of the local chapters, check here: \_\_\_ Potomac Valley \_\_\_ Tri-County  
\_\_\_ Vandalia

Thank you for joining MSCB!