

**Insight: The Voice of  
The American Council of the Blind of New York, Inc.**

<http://www.acbny.org/>

**Winter 2018**

President, Lori Scharff

E-mail: [president@acbny.info](mailto:president@acbny.info)

Editor: Annie Chiappetta

E-mail: [editor@acbny.info](mailto:editor@acbny.info)

The American Council of the Blind of New York is the largest consumer advocacy and support organization of blind and visually impaired people in the state. Your financial contributions help ACB NY's work to promote the educational, vocational and social advancement of blind and visually impaired people in New York. Send your tax-deductible donations to ACB NY, 104 Tilrose Ave., Malverne, NY 11565.

Join the Monthly Monetary Support (MMS) program and support ACB National and ACB NY through the 2 for 1 program. Find out more about joining by going to <http://acb.org/content/acb%E2%80%99s-monthly-monetary-support-mms-program>

If you'd like to renew your membership or become a member, you can fill out our [online membership form](#) at [www.acbny.info](http://www.acbny.info), or call 800-522-3303.

Insight is available through e-mail or via the ACB NY website at <http://www.acbny.info/>. You can also find the most recent issues on NFB's Newsline under New York publications. If you wish to change your subscription, please notify the Newsletter Editor by sending an email to [editor@acbny.info](mailto:editor@acbny.info) or call 800-522-3303.

Follow ACB of New York on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/ACBNewYork>.

Follow our Twitter feed at [http://www.twitter.com/acb\\_ny](http://www.twitter.com/acb_ny)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message – Lori Scharff [lorischarff@gmail.com](mailto:lorischarff@gmail.com)

Editor's Message – Annie Chiappetta [editor@acbny.org](mailto:editor@acbny.org)

News from Membership Chair – Jean Mann

Chapter Round UP

Legislative Update – Ian Foley

Student Scholarship Opportunities

Talking Book Upstate Update – New York State Branch of NLS

Travel Tips from the TSA

Potpourri

The Sound of Her Voice – nonfiction by Eric Brinkman

The Huntress – fiction by T.B. Page

Consumer Vision Magazine

The Book Shelf

Ann K Parsons and Ann Chiappetta

Passings

My Uniform – Penny Parker

2017 ACB of NY Directory of Officers and Directors

President's Message  
From the Desk of the President

By Lori Scharff

It was fantastic to see many of you while at convention in Utica. The Utica Council of the Blind and the members of the Convention Committee did an outstanding job of putting together an excellent convention.

Speaking of conventions, the convention for the 2018 American Council of the Blind of New York will be held in Rochester, from October 4 through October 7. This will be at the same time as the American Council of the Blind's fall 2018 Board of Directors Meeting. This will really be the time when we kick off looking forward to cohosting the 2019 American Council of the Blind's Conference and Convention in July of 2019.

Next, I want to remind everyone to check with your local or special interest chapter regarding membership dues. For people who are members-at-large (meaning you do not have a local or special interest chapter for which you are a member), dues are \$10.00.

Some of you may remember that ACBNY is part of a lawsuit about poor access to sidewalks and curb cuts in lower Manhattan. We are still negotiating in that case; but, the judge has ruled that United Spinal Association (formerly Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association EPVA) was not working on behalf of all people with disabilities when they did an accessibility review of paths of travel along sidewalks. The case has another hearing in February, 2018.

In closing, now more than ever, it is important to keep connected on issues that affect people who are blind or visually impaired. Regulations are being repealed daily and this is changing things impacting us as people who are blind. We need to be there on the state and federal level to provide input into legislative matters as they impact the lives of people who are blind. If we are not providing input than we have nothing to complain about when laws are not giving us what we want! One also must remember that with rights come responsibilities and the education of oneself about your rights as well as your responsibilities will help achieve the changes we want to help the blindness community.

---

---

Editor's Message – Annie Chiappetta [editor@acbny.info](mailto:editor@acbny.info)

Greetings and Happy New Year from the sound shore area. This issue is full of great reading but also brings the passing of two individuals in the ACB family: M.J. Schmitt and Sukosh Fearon. May they both find peace and may their memories remain unforgotten in our hearts.

Thank you to all the contributors who make the newsletter a success. Your news is important; please keep sending items to help this newsletter continue to be something people can't wait to read.

Speaking of reading, we have a great line-up for you -- this issue presents two wonderfully written stories, one of fiction, written by Terence Page, the other nonfiction written by Eric Brinkman, both ACBNY members. Additionally, our own Ann K Parsons has released her new science fiction novel, so don't forget to support her by reading it and dropping her a note to let her know that you want to read her book. I have also included the book release for my second book, and I would love to hear from you.

Chapter officers, please distribute the scholarship information to your eligible members, the deadlines are coming up soon.

Finally, I welcome comments and suggestions on how to improve this publication. Comments can be emailed to [editor@acbny.info](mailto:editor@acbny.info)

###

News from Membership Chair

From Jean Mann, ACBNY Membership Chair

I just wanted to let you know that starting in January, the Braille Forum will no longer be available on computer CD's and the cassette version will convert to NLS style cartridges. Please notify members of your chapters who currently receive the Braille Forum in one of these formats regarding the changes. Thanks.

##

Chapter Round-Up:

## Update from Westchester

WCB held elections in November, 2017. The following individuals have been elected or re-elected: Maria Samuels, President; Annie Chiappetta, Vice President; Jim Pulsoni, Treasurer; and Rich Laine as secretary. The following folks have been elected to the board of directors: Rita Pulsoni, Cathy Bieder, Joe Granderson and Eric Brinkman.

## GDUES

The elections for Guide Dog Users of the Empire State were held and the following individuals have been elected for the second term: Annie Chiappetta, President; Mike Golfo, Vice President; Jim Pulsoni, Treasurer; Nancy Murray, secretary; Meghan Parker, director; Eric Brinkman, director; Joan Lee and Rita Pulsoni completes the slate for the GDUES board. We want to thank those members who also ran and encourage them to run again in the next election. We also want to thank the nominating committee headed by Mary Beth Metzger with Don Moore and Audrey Schading. We are looking forward to bringing more interesting and fun events to this year's state convention.

##

## Legislative Update -- Ian Foley

Hello from the Legislative Committee. This year's Legislative Weekend in Albany is being organized and chaired by Mike Godino and Ian Foley. Mark your calendars for the last weekend of April. The dates are: Sat. 4/28/2018 through Mon. 4/30/2018.

We will be returning to the Ramada Plaza Hotel, with reduced room rates of \$85 per night. We will follow a similar format as in previous years: the board meeting on Saturday, training on the issues Sunday, and visiting the Legislative Office Building for appointments on Monday. Some lunches may be provided, as we determine the schedule.

For those who have never attended the legislative weekend, consider joining us this year. We are happy to report a victory from last year's efforts, having the Reader's Aid Fund bill pass both houses, and recently signed by the governor. 2018 is the second year of this session, and we will encourage further action from our elected officials on last year's bills, as well as new issues chosen by the committee. If you would like to be part of choosing our issues this year, consider joining us early in 2018; it involves a few conference calls, and requesting appointments with your local legislators in the Assembly and Senate.

On that note, we are seeking a representative from each chapter for the committee. Please discuss this in your meetings, and speak to members who you feel would be an asset to the process. No prior experience is necessary--just your interest and passion to improve the lives of blind New Yorkers. Please email Mike Godino ([mikeg125@optonline.net](mailto:mikeg125@optonline.net)) or Ian Foley ([ianfoley206@hotmail.com](mailto:ianfoley206@hotmail.com)) your chapter rep's name and contact info. We plan to begin the process in the next few weeks.

For your info, the Ramada Plaza Hotel is located at:

3 Watervliet Ave Ext, Albany, NY 12206

[Phone: \(518\) 438-8431](tel:(518)438-8431)

On behalf of the Legislative Committee, thank you in advance for helping us make 2018 another successful year in our advocacy and legislative efforts.

###

Student Scholarship Opportunities

The American Council of the Blind has a great opportunity for students who are legally blind to earn a scholarship, whether you are going to a technical college, an entering freshman, undergraduate or a graduate student. Over \$45,000 in scholarships are awarded to students each year. To be eligible, you need to be legally blind in both eyes, maintain a 3.3 GPA, and be involved in your school/local community. As a scholarship winner, you will experience firsthand ACB's national conference and convention in July, where you will meet other students who share the same life experiences, create lasting friendships, and network with individuals who understand what you are going through and can help you with your journey.

The 2018 ACB Scholarship application is now open! Go to:

<http://acb.org/scholarship2018-application> Applications must be submitted no later than February 15th, 2018 at 11:59 P.M. Central time. For more information, please contact the ACB national office at (612) 332-3242 or (800) 866-3242. We look forward to receiving your application materials.

###

#### CCLVI Scheigert Scholarships 2018-2019

The Council of Citizens with Low Vision International (CCLVI), an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind, annually awards three scholarships in the amount of \$3,000 each to fulltime college students - an incoming freshman, an undergraduate and a graduate student - all of whom must be low vision, maintain a strong GPA and be involved in school/local community activities.

Application materials must be received by 11:59 pm Eastern Time March 15, 2018. Scholarship monies will be awarded for the 2018-2019 academic year. To access the guidelines, application and vision certification form, visit <http://cclvi.org> and click on Scheigert Scholarship link.

Applications will be available to complete and submit online from January 1, 2018 to the March 15 deadline. Questions may be directed to [scholarship@cclvi.org](mailto:scholarship@cclvi.org) or 844-460-0625.

We look forward to receiving your application.

###

## Scholarships Everyone!

Greetings from the desks of the Co-Chairs of the ACBNY Scholarship Committee. Let me begin by thanking all of you, the members of the American Council of the Blind of New York; without all of you, we would not be able to provide a scholarship.

We regret that we did not have a scholarship winner for 2017. We feel the application was out there and should have had a high level of visibility. Unfortunately, we had no applicants. For this reason, it is our hope that everyone who sees the scholarship application this year and in the future will share it with at least one worthy student. We hope this request will have the committee very busy judging applicants during the late summer. Thanks for your assistance.

In that same vain, you the members have stepped up to make it possible and, because we did not have a winner for 2017, it only means we have more to give in the future. The committee met a few weeks ago and we decided to double our efforts, double the award, and request that we, the members do what we can to double our support of this worthy program.

As requested above, your help in distributing the application should provide a better canvas throughout the community of blind students. And yes, the committee decided to double the award from five hundred dollars (\$500) to one thousand dollars (\$1000) for 2018 and beyond. This would not have been possible without your help and support. Additionally, the winners are required to attend the annual state convention during the year they win at the expense of ACBNY. Here again is where we, the members come into play, not only with that much needed support, but by getting to know the winner and sharing our ACBNY experiences.

For 2018 the Scholarship Committee will continue to raise money as we did last year. We hope that chapters and individuals can again donate baskets to the



silent auction at the legislative weekend and the 2018 state convention in Rochester. Additionally, we will again be hosting a fundraising event Friday night at convention. During the 2017 event we had a blast and raised a healthy sum to move the scholarship fund forward. We need to keep the momentum in the hope we can attract folks to ACBNY.

Many of us have benefited from the organization in many different ways over the years; we must continue the good work while assisting others. Please join us by participating in the fundraising efforts of the scholarship committee. We need items for baskets, but cash and checks always work just as well.

Thanks again for all your help. We look forward to your continued support throughout 2018.

## **UPSTATE UPDATE**

### **TALKING BOOK AND BRAILLE LIBRARY (TBBL)**

#### **FALL 2017**

#### **NLS Launches New Website**

The NLS has launched a new website! Just go to the same address [www.loc.gov/nls](http://www.loc.gov/nls) and checkout its improved look and structure. The URL has not changed. Your bookmarks to the NLS homepage [www.loc.gov/nls](http://www.loc.gov/nls) will continue to function correctly, though many of the internal URLs have changed. The BARD login address of <https://nlsbard.loc.gov> remains the same. No changes have been made to BARD or the NLS catalog.

Travel Tips From the TSA

## **TSA Offers Passenger Support**

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has issued its usual reminders regarding TSA programs and services beneficial to travelers with disabilities and medical conditions.

- **TSA Cares** is a helpline for travelers with disabilities or medical conditions who wish to prepare for the screening process prior to flying. Travelers or their companions may call TSA Cares toll free at 855-787-2227 or email [TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov](mailto:TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov). The hours of operation for the TSA Cares helpline are 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Eastern Time Monday-Friday and 9:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays.
- **TSA Pre-Check** is a screening program open to travelers with disabilities and medical conditions who volunteer information about themselves prior to flying. The program allows TSA to focus on passengers that the agency knows less about and those who are considered high-risk. Although Pre-Check is open to everyone, it may be particularly useful for veterans with mobility challenges.
- A **TSA.gov Landing Page** contains information about the screening of disabilities or medical conditions. It can be accessed via the international icon on the page. TSA posts information that is developed specifically for travelers with disabilities and medical conditions. Travelers can select a specific disability or medical condition at [www.TSA.gov](http://www.TSA.gov) and learn how to prepare for security screening.
- **The TSA Disability Notification Card** documents the disability or medical condition. The notification card can also be found at <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/special-procedures>. It can be accompanied by other medical documentation.
- **TSA Technology Screenings or Pat-Down Procedures** are sometimes troublesome to air travelers of all types. Learning more about these procedures can make them less threatening.
- NOTE: there may be a fee associated with obtaining TSA Pre-Check as well as a 10 minute, in person appointment that includes a background check and fingerprinting.
- Additional information is located at <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening>.

##

## Potpourri

##

The Alumni Association of the New York State School for the Blind will hold its centennial reunion June 7 through 10, 2018 at the Quality Inn and Suites, [8250 Park Road, Batavia, NY 14020](#); phone [\(585\) 344-2100](#). At the same time, we will join students, staff and guests of the New York State School for the Blind in celebrating 150 years of outstanding service to the people of New York State.

Reunion events will include a ceremony celebrating the school's sesquicentennial, a presentation from the New York State Museum, the unveiling of a tactile mural which some of our members helped to create, and a picnic with students and staff. There will also be several chances to socialize with old friends and make new ones and to remember our alma mater. Our association began in 1918 and was incorporated in March 1924. The only time there wasn't a reunion was during World War II.

Membership is open to anyone at least 18 years of age who either attended the New York State School for the Blind or is recommended by a member in good standing of the association. Any applicant who did not attend the New York State School for the Blind must have a substantive relationship to the recommending member or to any other member in good standing. Annual dues are \$15, with multi-year plans available.

The deadline for reunion reservations is May 1, 2018. If you wish to become a member, or have questions about the reunion, contact Diane Scalzi at [\(586\) 337-5226](#), or email [dscalzi@comcast.net](mailto:dscalzi@comcast.net).

##

As a blind man, I've often said that I always put a voice to a name instead of a face. When I watch a TV show or film, it's the actors' voices that sing themselves into my brain and become the characters. From James Gandolfini and John Turturro's twangy Italian rasps to Jonathan Banks' gravely growl as senior Breaking Bad badass Mike, the vocal tone and timbre defines these people. I may never have drawn these types of connections to the Star Wars universe if NPR hadn't adapted the classic trilogy into a set of radio dramas.

My first exposure to George Lucas' galaxy was an audiobook from the expanded universe followed by a viewing of the original 1977 film with the whole family. My unformed retinas enabled me to make out some shapes but no faces. The one image that stuck in my head was the huge triangular spaceship in the opening scene, referred to as "the big cheese" by a few school pals. My parents gave me some feedback on what was happening on screen, consisting mostly of what the various alien creatures looked like. I could discern that Obi-Wan Kenobi was old, while the three protagonists were relatively young, but had no conception of what they looked like.

The following July, I sat by the pool opening presents for my seventh birthday. "Woo!" my sister announced after I ripped the wrapping paper off a box. "The Empire Strikes Back, the Original Radio Drama! Ten episodes on five cassette tapes!" She then proceeded to read the episode titles. "Freedom's Winter", "Fire and Ice", "The Millennium Falcon Pursuit...". My favorite part of the original film had been the scene where Han and Luke shot down tie fighters in the Millennium

Falcon (mostly due to the musical score). So, during the next family car ride, I popped “The Millennium Falcon Pursuit” into my Walkman and put on headphones. I listened as Han and Leia flew through an asteroid field, arguing all the while, only to wind up inside some sort of space slug. I had no idea what a radio drama was, but it felt like a movie with extra dialogue to replace the visuals. Every scene was a visceral experience--in fact it almost felt like these adaptations had been written for someone with a visual disability. The sound editing and effects that spanned the stereo stage gave the recording a theater-esque quality when heard on headphones. The music, the sound, the voices, were all sublime, giving me the pigments needed to paint pictures of this far away world. It was a whole galaxy right between the ears, limitless and all my own. The film seemed gutted in comparison, with fewer scenes and less dialogue. Emotion was lacking in the actors’ voices--the opening scene when Luke is stuck in the blizzard had far less tension. Billy Dee Williams’ Lando Calrissian seemed particularly tame, not exuding nearly as much attitude as he did in the radio play.

Subsequent Christmases brought me the radio adaptations of A New Hope and Return of the Jedi, and they became the cream of vacation car rides and joyous snow days. I would occasionally listen on the family stereo, but preferred headphones whenever possible. Sharp dialogue like Han’s description of the ewoks as “furry butterballs” continued to fuel my imagination while making the movies seem like an afterthought. The adaptation of A New Hope contained so much extra material that it was nearly thrice the length of the film. The character most wonderfully transformed by this was Princess Leia. Devoting an entire episode to her just learning about the death star, followed by another of her

acquiring the plans, made her character much more purposeful than on the silver screen. Depicting her as a senator privy to government secrets sparked my curiosity about politics for better or worse. At first I wasn't sure what I liked so much about voice actress Ann Sachs' performance as the princess. The way she sort of but didn't quite roll her Rs and Ls, or maybe it was her attitude for miles that always seemed lovely to me. Her sprightly, animated delivery was almost melodic at times. I kept coming back to one scene that parallels the opening of the film: her ship has just been boarded, and she's scurrying to get the plans to R2D2 before being captured. She breathes frantically, muttering "Oh man" under her breath accompanied by the sounds of footsteps on metal grating. A storm trooper shouts, "Search that passageway, secure the junction!" Leia lets out a gasp, leaving the listener with harrowing images of a woman who has just come of age but knows her life is over. Much later in life I read an article describing what men really desire to hear in a woman's voice... breathiness, as it supposedly accentuates their femininity. Thinking back to Leia's fate in that scene, I realized that my mind's eye found feminine beauty in sound, not sight. When we reach Jabba's sail barge in the Jedi radio production, Leia grunts and shouts "Now you know how it feels to have cold iron around your throat, Jabba!" accompanied by the sound of rattling chains. The images of a sweaty royal blooded lady with that sassy voice would give rise to recurring fantasies throughout adolescence. Eventually, in college, a friend told me that Leia looked "pretty hot in a metal bikini" in the film, and I realized that the radio crew had done their job. Viewing the scene in the film gave me nothing but aural chaos, and adding audio description only gave me a sterile account of what was on screen. It left me cold, feeling as though I were being myopically spoon-fed.

Even more affecting than the masochistic Jabba bit was a scene exclusive to the radio drama that immediately followed. In a voice just above a whisper, Leia asks Han if he's figured out a way to thank her for rescuing him. Then she asks to be excused so she can go find some clothes that don't require a "cabaret permit". The use of the word "cabaret" expanded my vocabulary as a child, continuing to improve on the film in this area without spoon-feeding images. Sachs' soft voice coming directly into my ear canals conjured sweet visions of a woman caressing a man. That's why Carrie Fisher could never be Princess Leia to me, even though her name was cemented in the cultural canon long before my birth. Aside from "I love you", she has no memorable lines in the movies that don't involve scoundrels, stench, walking carpets or nerf-herders. There's hardly any timbre to recount.

Nowadays, spunky women are a sci-fi genre convention nearly as common as faster-than-light travel. But Princess Leia was the original sci-fi babe born through the intimacy of headphones. I couldn't believe when an audio described copy of the film relayed that she was "A woman with her hair coiled into two buns on either side of her head." This image certainly didn't match my mind's version of the tale, which remains fluid and ever-changing with every listen. By forcing the brain to build and internalize images, the radio shows have become more real to me than the films. It is human nature to want what we can't have, so naturally I'd always been curious what people look like. I still am but it signifies nothing. It is just another spec of data spoon-fed, as sterile as a workman-like narration of a film. It will never touch me deeply like the sound of a voice.

There's nothing like the wise innocence of youth, which the Star Wars radio dramas always return me to. They ignite my imagination like no single narrator audiobook or Hollywood film ever could. As Disney churns out Star Wars movies every year, the radio plays remain a timeless labor of love that every fan should hear. They are one of the earliest, greatest, and most unsung examples of how Lucas' work is improved via outside input. They are also a perfect illustration of how just a few people and a set of microphones can turn the mind into a galaxy far, far away.

##

The Huntress (Jean Mann)

Fiction © 2017 by T. B. Page

Editor's Note: While the names and locations mentioned in the story may seem familiar, the story is most assuredly a work of fiction.

The red and white light crosses the building across the street bouncing into an almond colored carpeted bedroom with egg shell painted walls and dances across a figure draped in a polka dotted blanket that she has had since she was a child. Her eyes creep open as the harsh light punches into her brain. Grumbling "what the hell", she forces her amber eyes to focus on the crimson numbers on the clock, 1:45 a.m. thinking this can't be good, cussing to herself and throwing her blanket to the side and heading for the closet.

Jean Mann is a 5 feet 1 inch 115-pound ball of tired. She has been with the FBI for almost 20 years and it was starting to wear on her. Without thinking she grabs her black slacks, a white blouse with pearl buttons and a shoulder holster with a custom-made Glock with a pearl handle. Donning her black jacket, she feels ready to greet the world.

Jean was a creature of habit. She always put her socks and shoes on last. It was a habit she picked up from her father who spent 30 years on the force. Grabbing her credentials, she stops by the mirror before leaving her apartment. Jean wasn't



vain but she always loved the way her hair looked when she got out of bed. Noticing how bloodshot her eyes were and blinking a couple of times and saying "there is no rest for the wicked and those who hunt them", locking her door and feeling the tightness of her workout, she thinks this better be quick.

Jean was in great shape. Most agents her age complained of aches and pains but Jean's sensual form was as tight as a shark. Her ebony locks caught the light and highlighted the blackness of the material of her jacket. Her soft angelic features always led people to underestimate her strength and unusually computer-like mind. Jean would often use that God-given face that most people underestimated to hide the innocence of a quick accurate killer when she needed to be. She used her weapon like a pen and painted her targets with pain and death.

Jean didn't know what floor to go to, so she pressed all the buttons below her own. When the elevator doors opened on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor there was a sharply dressed rookie guarding the crime scene. Holding out his hand to stop her, "Madam you can't come this way", sighing... "Check the badge rookie." "But I was told no one gets in". Glancing at his name plate, "Matt, is it? How long have you been on the force?" Matt, speaking proudly, "Six months." "When you get some dirt on that uniform then you talk to me." Walking past him, "Just tell them that the FBI is here."

Walking down the hall and seeing another rookie with a box of gloves and footies, she grabs a pair of both and dons her hands and feet. She enters Apartment 3h and pauses before the crime scene investigators. "Am I clear?" One of the C.I.'s looks up acknowledging her badge and says yes. They are in the bedroom with the body. Jean, raising an eyebrow, "Body?" In her exhaustion how could she miss it. The stench of overwhelming death.

She was about to chastise herself when a memory of a class instructor at Quantico comes rushing back in to her mind.

Lack of sleep dulls every sense in the body. That is when logic is your best weapon to depend on. For example, your eyes see a picture of manure but you don't smell it. Your mind will find a memory to match that smell and you will imagine you smell the image. It is at this time you must tell yourself what you are experiencing is not real. The fog of sleep lifts and Jean's nostrils open and the renewed smell of death tears her bloodshot eyes and hastens her steps.

The C.I. is packing up his equipment. "Oh...." Sergeant Detective Miller and Lieutenant Detective Oshinsky are the leads. She stops in her tracks.

Speaking through her teeth, "Is that David Oshinsky?" The C.I. responding, "Yeah... I think so." Jean Mann, cursing to herself, decides to go forward.

David Oshinsky was a rough and tough old-fashioned cop. He reminded Jean a lot of her father. David Oshinsky was 6 feet 1, 240 pounds, with a little paunch and a seasoned face topped with salt and pepper hair. Time sprinkled snow on his head but spared a man that defined a confidently handsome face. The feature that made Jean want David Oshinsky was his expressive eyes and eyebrows. His brows told you everything about the man. His chocolate eyes and long dark eyebrows told you of love, storms, sunny days and the coming of hell. Probably why they found themselves in bed way too many times. When Jean realized she was dating a Freudian nightmare she ended it like pulling off a bandage on a fresh burn. David didn't take it well. So, when she entered the doorway of the bedroom she expected war. And she wasn't wrong.

Noticing her at the door Lieutenant Detective Oshinsky raises his eyebrows and voice at the same time. "WHO THE HELL LET IN THE FED?" Oshinsky rushes to the door but is restrained by his partner Miller.

Sergeant Mack Miller is a man of calm and patience. Miller is a dark walnut complexed man with a short-cropped Afro on the top surrounded by faded sides. Mack dressed like Wall Street and handled the streets like a criminal. Mack never yelled but being 6 feet 4 and 220 pounds of muscle, he didn't have to.

"David relax. Remember she lives here."

"I haven't forgotten a damn thing! I don't give a damn, why is she at my crime scene!" yells Oshinsky. Jean, raising her hands in surrender, "I am just here to help." Oshinsky still shouting "NOBODY NEEDS YOU!" Jean, pleading with her eyes, "Now David, I told you I was sorry about ... well you know."

Miller moves out of the way to allow Oshinsky to approach Jean. Lowering his voice and stepping near her right ear, "You know this has nothing to do with that." Jean, smiling slightly, remembers she taught him to appeal to someone's emotions by speaking to them in their right ear, which appeals to the emotional part of the brain.

Miller, speaking to Jean, "Did you know the vic.?" "No." Jean shaking her head.

"David let her look, okay?" "Okay. Mack, if she screws up our crime scene it is on your head!" "Look around Jean but don't touch anything." "You have my word." Oshinsky mockingly, "The Word of Jean Mann, Big whoop."

Jean Mann, ignoring the comment, notices the white canes in the corner. "Did you know she was blind or visually impaired?" Oshinsky says "We're not idiots. We saw the braille and the canes." Jean asks, "Mind if I check out the bathroom?" Miller answers, "Go ahead but remember don't touch anything."

As Jean strolls the apartment she begins to observe how everything in the apartment appears to have a braille label. Going to the bathroom and opening the medicine cabinet, reading the prescription bottles carefully, then staring at the ceiling in thought. Then returning to the bedroom where the body was found. "May I ask the theory of the crime?" "Jean," Oshinsky says with authority, "it was obviously a suicide," pointing to the body in the bed. "Look at how the body is posed in rigor mortis." The victim's body is dressed in her nightgown. The body has decomposed to the point you can't separate the skin from the material of the clothing.

"What did she use?" "Pills". "Where is the bottle and where was it found?" "It was found in her hand." "May I read the bottle?" Miller looks to Oshinsky for confirmation. Oshinsky says "It has all been photographed and logged in so okay." Jean reads the label, peers in to the bottle, humming. "Hmmm... I don't think this was a suicide. No, this was definitely murder." Oshinsky, throwing up his hands in frustration, "Here we go. The Great Jean Mann thinks she is smarter than everyone." "No, I am not; I just try to pay attention and think logically. Look at the bottle. It has no braille." Oshinsky says "So". "Look at this apartment. This woman was anal about labeling. She definitely had some control issues. Look under the alarm clock. I will bet you there is a braille label underneath it." Miller lifts the clock with his gloved hand. She is right. "Now look at the bottle, no braille."

Oshinsky says "So she didn't label her suicide pills. That doesn't prove murder. Plus, the apartment was locked from the inside. If it wasn't for a neighbor complaining about the smell we would never have known she was dead." Jean asks "Did you see the medicine cabinet?" Miller says yes.

Jean: "Any combination of those drugs in a large dose would have done her in. Why pay for pills to kill yourself when you have a medicine cabinet of potential poisons? I bet it was someone she knew. Who had a key to her apartment?"

"Maybe she didn't buy the pills and maybe she didn't have time to label the suicide pills but you cannot for sure say it was murder," Oshinsky states with fact. "The Great Jean Mann is basing her whole theory of the crime on guesses." Miller

adds "David is right Jean; all those things can be explained away. So how do you definitely know it was murder?" "Simple. Look at the pills."

Miller pours the few pills left over into his gloved hand and offers them to Oshinsky. The detectives look up with questioning and confused faces. "Look at their size. They're huge. My grandmother used to call them horse pills. Where is the water?" inquires Jean. "What ..." "Where is the water," Jean asks again. "There is no water glass, no pitcher, not even a can of soda. Pills that size would have to be taken with water or some type of liquid. How did she take the pills? The only way those pills could be swallowed is if they had some help, like a hand. That's how I know it's murder."

Understanding floods the room. Miller smiles, "Damn. Why didn't I think of that!" "I really don't like you," barks Oshinsky.

"I think you guys got it from here." Jean, with the face of arrogant victory, turns and heads out of the victim's apartment. "You boys keep it quiet. I am going back to bed." Leaning back into the bedroom, gesturing to the room with her hands, "Could you turn off the red and white lights? Some of us have a hard day in the morning. Thanks."

Miller watches Jean leave. "I see why you found her so damn sexy." Oshinsky stares at Miller with a predatory glare. Miller says "Sorry man. Time to go back to work." Oshinsky replies "You do that!"

Reaching her apartment, Jean places her garments and gun neatly in a chair across from her bed. Slipping in to a purple Victoria Secret long shirt and pulling that polka dotted blanket over her aching form she sighs in contentment as the patrol car lights turn off. She closes her eyes and snuggles down into the mattress. Buzzing on her phone pulls her up. She reads the text. "You looked good. Call me. O." She ponders for a moment and texts "Maybe ... and you look good too." She puts the phone back on the night stand, rolls in to her blanket and sleeps the sleep of the huntress.

###

Free online magazine delivered right to your inbox

Consumer Vision is a publication which includes material for all consumers, blind or sighted. Featured in our magazine are topics about health, weather, guide dogs, cooking, tips for VIPs, current events, and other important information. To

subscribe, please send an email to [bobbranco93@gmail.com](mailto:bobbranco93@gmail.com). You can also check out a back issue at [www.consumervisionmagazine.com](http://www.consumervisionmagazine.com).

Bob Branco, Publisher

###

The Book Shelf

The Demmies: A Novel

by Ann K. Parsons / C 2017

In e-book (\$3.99) and print (\$17.95) from Amazon and other online sellers / 446 pages

Synopsis:

They were the public's darlings, but they led a double life. By day, they posed for pictures, were guests on TV shows, and helped to increase knowledge about genetic engineering by taking part in scientific experiments. By night, they faced Dr. Albert Lud's unauthorized experiments and his torture.

Was there something better for the genetically engineered, foot-high humans? Could they escape? If they did, could they find food, shelter, and freedom from the ogre who tormented them? Could they trust any of the "big folk" to help them? These were some of the questions that kept Alex Kenyon awake at night.

His daughter Ruth wondered what made a human being. Was it size? Was it intelligence? Was it belief in God? What made her know she was a human being, even though only nine inches tall?

This is the story of how Alex's and Ruth's questions are answered.

More info available at: <https://www.dldbooks.com/annparsons/>

About the Author

Ann Kathleen Parsons was born in 1953 in Olean, New York. She attended Elmira College, where she received a B.A. in English Education. She continued her studies at St. Bonaventure University, where she received an M.S. in Guidance and Personnel.

Ms. Parsons was born blind, which has affected her life in many ways, most notably in how she reads and writes. The Demmies began as a braille manuscript, written on a Perkins Braillewriter, and it has ended up, after going through several incarnations, as a Word document. The author's struggles with obtaining information and with writing are part of the reason she works in the field of assistive technology.

Ms. Parsons is self-employed as a tutor to adults who are blind or deaf-blind in learning braille and in assistive technology. Her business is Portal Tutoring: <http://www.portaltutoring.info>

She has been writing as a hobby for 40 years, crafting novels in her spare time. She enjoys storytelling and began writing in order to give this need a vehicle for expression.

When Ms. Parsons is not working or writing, she enjoys reading voraciously, especially mysteries, science fiction, and fantasy.

#### Contact Information

Biographical information on Ms. Parsons' personal website:  
<http://www.portaltutoring.info/bio.html>

E-mail: [akparsons819@gmail.com](mailto:akparsons819@gmail.com)

Telephone: 585-244-0477

*Follow Your Dog: A Story of Love and Trust*

Nonfiction by Ann Chiappetta / C 2017

In e-book (\$3.99) and print (\$11.95) from Amazon and multiple other online sellers.

Follow the author as she moves from an unhappy early life and her unstoppable loss of vision to happiness and fulfillment as a guide dog user, wife, and mother who works as a V.A. counselor. This touching, informative, and beautifully written book will surely resonate with many besides guide dog raisers, trainers, and handlers. Includes stories and photos of her most beloved dogs, past and present.

From the text:

While there is practical merit to the human-canine bond, which developed over a period of 70,000 years, it's not akin to any other human-animal relationship. It is unique. The person and guide dog are interdependent, and the bond of mutual trust is what makes the partnership successful and fulfilling for both. With this book, I hope to take the reader on a journey of understanding: learning what it's like to overcome the darker side of disability by walking the path of independence with a canine partner.

For cover photo, longer synopsis, free text preview, author bio, and buying links, see: <http://www.dldbooks.com/annchiappetta>

Ann Chiappetta, M.S., lives in New Rochelle, New York. Her personal website is [www.annchiappetta.com](http://www.annchiappetta.com)

##

Passings

Remembering Sukosh – Jean Mann

Those of us who attended the scholarship dinner at our 2017 state convention in Utica will fondly remember the band that entertained us. The keyboard player and lead singer was our own Sukosh Fearon. What most of us didn't know was that Sukosh wasn't feeling very well, and hadn't been for some time. So, we were shocked and dismayed when two weeks later, we learned that he had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He died late on the evening of Saturday, December 23. Several of his ACBNY friends were among those who attended his

funeral. I've known Sukosh for a long time, so I thought I'd write a few things I knew about him, and some things I learned from his family and other friends.

Robert (Sukosh) Fearon was born on November 16, 1953 in a hospital on the United States Air Force Base in Tachacowka, Japan. He resided his whole life in Oneida, New York, and spent childhood summers in Thousand Island Park. He attended the New York State School for the Blind in Batavia through his sophomore year, and then attended Oneida High School for his junior and senior years, graduating in 1972. I don't remember too much about Sukosh from those high school days; I know that he was on the wrestling team and I do remember his strong bass voice in our choir.

He then graduated from the Newhouse School of Syracuse University, worked for two years at WAER Radio, spent some time working for Madison County ADAPT, and then spent 36 years at NBT Bank, formerly Oneida Valley National Bank, where he was employed until his death.

Besides being a member of ACB, Sukosh, at one time or another, belonged to the Canestota Lions Club, the Oneida Elks Lodge where he was the lodge organist, the TriValley Masonic Lodge, and the Moose Lodge. He was also on the boards of Industries for the Blind of New York State and the United Way. And he played and sang in the choir at the Methodist Church. He was also an active member of the Alumni Association of the New York State School for the Blind and was its treasurer for many years. When he wasn't at work or at a meeting, he was often playing music with a band somewhere in Central New York.

He married his wife Pat (whom he affectionately called "Bayber" or "my darlin darlin") on September 16, 2000, and she became very involved in all of his activities.

Sukosh made friends wherever he went, and once he met you, he never forgot you. If he wanted to go someplace and there was no public transportation, he walked, called one of those friends he'd met along the way and asked for a ride, or stood at the side of the road with his thumb out. Sometimes people picked him up and simply drove him where he wanted to go, sometimes they took him home, fed him dinner, and then took him on his way. He originally met Pat that way, but that's a story for another day. Don LoGuidice, the former CEO of the Central Association for the Blind in Utica, told me that Sukosh called him up late one night



looking for a ride somewhere. Don invited him to stay at his house for the night and the next morning dropped him off on the side of the road where he wanted to be left off.

One of Sukosh's cousins told us how, when Sukosh visited him on his family's farm, he insisted on being allowed to drive a tractor and one of the trucks. His uncle, understandably concerned, but knowing there was no way he could dissuade Sukosh, made him promise to stop if he hit anything. At least one fence had to be fixed! He also told us that occasionally Sukosh wanted to get away from it all, so they would go out in the fields where there was nobody around. Sukosh would get his famous harmonica out of his pocket and start playing. One night, he sensed a presence; unbeknownst to him there were some heifers in the field. One came up behind him and licked his neck. We were in church, so his cousin had to paraphrase Sukosh's reaction!

Sukosh wasn't as active as he might have wanted to be in ACBNY, but he came to conventions when he could, and he and Pat helped us with two conventions held in Utica before we had a chapter there. He often made comments on the list in his folksy style and usually signed off with "the best everyday".

He loved a good meal, a drink or several, his music, people, and life. I spoke with Sukosh two or three times after his cancer was diagnosed. He was upbeat, even when he was in hospice and now he only had a few days to live. He told all of us who spoke with him that he loved us, and gave us messages for people he knew he wouldn't be speaking with again. The last time I spoke with him he ended our conversation with a prayer.

Sukosh is survived by his parents, two sisters and a brother-in-law, several nieces and nephews, Pat, her sons and their wives, her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and many friends. He was laid to rest with his cane in his hand and his harmonica lying on his chest.

One of the songs sung at Sukosh's funeral was called "What are They Doing in Heaven Today" and the singer changed a line to "What is Sukosh Doing in Heaven Today". I'm sure he's found a keyboard and a band or two to play in and if things ever get too quiet, or he's bored, that harmonica comes out. He's probably found friends who went before him and has already made a bunch of new ones.

So Sukosh, keep looking out for us down here. Put in a good word for us, will you please? We expect you'll be there to greet us with a firm handshake and a big hug when we get there. In the meantime, the best everyday Sukosh, the best every day.

##

Remembering MJ – Mary Beth Metzger

A charter ACB member and a founding ACBNY member has fought her last battle. In the early morning of Friday, January 12, M. J. Schmitt, 86, died peacefully in Florida after a long illness.

Throughout her life M. J. worked tirelessly to ensure that all persons who are blind could enjoy the same opportunities in education, employment and social status as their sighted peers. M. J. gave unstintingly of her time and knowledge, investing in the younger generations who are leading ACB today.

In the 1950's and 1960's, well before the Rehabilitation Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act, M. J. was competitively employed as a secretary, was raising two children, was on the board of directors at the Association for the Blind of Rochester, New York, (now ABVI) and was traveling extensively. She pursued her life and work goals relentlessly, often at considerable cost. Despite her crowded schedule, M. J. always took time to talk with others, particularly with young blind people, and, whenever possible, to convince them to spend an afternoon assisting with her latest project.

It was not enough for M. J. to succeed as an individual. Her personal successes never caused her to become complacent or to minimize the formidable barriers facing all blind people. She consistently did her best to remove those barriers for others, as well as for herself. In her determination to move forward M. J. never forgot the people who remained on the fringes, like the woman who was imprisoned in a room as a child just because she was blind. Both personally and as part of an organization, M. J. did her best to ensure that other blind people would not suffer similar isolation and abuse.

After working in the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) for several years, M. J. and others reluctantly abandoned the NFB and formed the ACB in 1961. For the

next fifty years M. J. would attend every national convention, at first with her young children and later alone. At those conventions she worked hard, always dressed professionally and still managed to spend many hours socializing with friends. Regardless of how late she stayed up the previous night, M. J. was always on the convention floor the next morning, ready to do battle for the causes she supported. M. J. had very definite opinions on most subjects, and she was not hesitant in expressing her views.

In 1976, after an extensive and often frustrating job search, M. J. left her native Rochester, New York in order to accept a job as a computer programmer at the Sears Tower in Chicago. One part of M. J.'s preparation for the move to Chicago was to train at Guiding Eyes for the Blind with Alice, the first of her several guide dogs. Together M. J. and her dogs navigated the busy streets of Chicago and traveled throughout the United States on behalf of ACB. Later M. J. would also serve on the graduate council for Guiding Eyes and would travel on their behalf as well.

During these trips M. J. was never without a small booklet listing each state's laws pertaining to guide dog access. When a limousine driver refused to transport M. J. and her guide dog from the Chicago airport she filed suit against the company, having exhausted all lesser means of redress.

The complaint was eventually resolved in M. J.'s favor.

M. J. did not seek conflict, but she never flinched from ensuring that her rights and the rights of others were considered.

Whether she was enjoying drinks with friends, selling tickets for a fund-raiser, speaking at a convention or cheering for her beloved Dodgers, M. J. plunged wholeheartedly into each task. She often stressed the need for each person to give back to the community and to help others whenever possible, and she did her best to follow these principles. M. J. remained a loyal friend, a formidable opponent and a staunch supporter of the democratic process.

If M. J. were reading this article now she would be growing impatient. After all, there is still so much more work to be done.

As we pay tribute to M. J. personally, locally and nationally, let us continue the legacy of compassion, perseverance and fortitude that she exhibited throughout the years. Let's not neglect to spend time with our friends either, both having fun and exchanging ideas. That, too, is part of the M. J. Schmitt legacy.

A memorial service for M. J. Schmitt will be held in Rochester, New York at a date to be determined. Condolences can be addressed to [Jeffhills58@hotmail.com](mailto:Jeffhills58@hotmail.com)

In lieu of flowers, contributions in memory of M. J. Schmitt can be sent to ACB for the angel memorial tribute program. Address to: ACB Treasurer; 6300 Shingle Creek Pkwy., Suite 195; Brooklyn, Center, MN 55430; or call: 800-866-3242.

###

My Uniform

© 2017 Penny Parker

I know you only see a dog when you see me in the street,

But look a little closer before we get to meet.

You'll see I'm in my uniform, this harness that I wear,

Should tell you that I'm working, I have a human in my care.

The flash that shines upon my lead shouts out the job I do,

I'm guiding in my uniform, I'm steady and I'm true.

Now would you grab a policeman, a doctor, nurse or nun,

A fireman or a surgeon, so you could have some fun.

Would you want to hug them, distract them from their task

I'm not so very different, so THINK, is all I ask.

I'm doing such a special job, I'm being someone's eyes

Distracting me to make a fuss, really isn't wise.

Would you rush to hug a police dog, or a sniffer dog for drugs?

Or a guard dog barking madly, just to get some hugs?

I doubt they'd greet you kindly, their owners too may shout.

So please I ask you nicely, walk on and miss me out.

I'm working in my uniform, it's very clear to see.

So, this I ask you kindly, don't attempt to distract me!

##

American Council of the Blind

Officers and Board of Directors Contact List

The following is the most up to date list of members of the ACB NY Board of Directors. If there are any errors, please notify Lori Scharff at [lorischarff@gmail.com](mailto:lorischarff@gmail.com) and your newsletter editor, Annie Chiappetta at [editor@acbny.info](mailto:editor@acbny.info)

January 2018

Lori Scharff, President [lorischarff@gmail.com](mailto:lorischarff@gmail.com)

[Michael Golfo](mailto:MichaelGolfo@acbny.org), 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President [mssg74@gmail.com](mailto:mssg74@gmail.com)

Karen Blachowicz, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President [karenabc1970@live.com](mailto:karenabc1970@live.com) )

Nancy Murray, Secretary: [nancy.murray1947@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.murray1947@gmail.com)

Bob White, Treasurer: [robertwhite11@verizon.net](mailto:robertwhite11@verizon.net)

Board of Directors

Capital District: Michael O'Brien, [m.obrien@samobile.net](mailto:m.obrien@samobile.net)

Greater New York: Terence Page [terencebpage@gmail.com](mailto:terencebpage@gmail.com)

Guide Dog Users of the Empire State: Meghan Parker:

[meghanschoeffling@gmail.com](mailto:meghanschoeffling@gmail.com)

Long Island: Rosanna Beaudrie: [rosannab40@aol.com](mailto:rosannab40@aol.com)

Rochester: Janet Wettenstein, [jan64@frontiernet.net](mailto:jan64@frontiernet.net)

Utica: Maria Heinlein-gage, [maria.heinlein@gmail.com](mailto:maria.heinlein@gmail.com)

Westchester: Ann Chiappetta, [ann.m.chiappetta@gmail.com](mailto:ann.m.chiappetta@gmail.com)

NYSCCLV: Kathy Casey, [kathycasey623@gmail.com](mailto:kathycasey623@gmail.com)

ACB of Western New York: Richard Fiorello [richardfiorello716@gmail.com](mailto:richardfiorello716@gmail.com)

Member at Large: Jean Mann [g30770@gmail.com](mailto:g30770@gmail.com)

End of INSIGHT Winter 2018