



## Table of Contents

President’s Message.....Page 2

House Bill 33 signed by Ohio Governor.....Page 3

Ohio DeafBlind SSP Amendment in HB 33.....Page 4

Letter from Ohio Senator Dr Sykes.....Page 5

Disability Rights Ohio.....Page 6

House Bill 152 Hearing Aids for Children.....Page 7

ASLTA Conference in Columbus.....Page 8-9

Red, White, & Bloom! AWARDS Arlon Nash!.....Page 10

Chuck Baird’s new book.....Page 11

Deaf Church in Toledo by Toledo Blade.....Page 12

100th Anniversary Columbus Speech/Hearing Center.....Page 12

Dog Awareness Week.....Page 13-14

Ohio GUAA Potluck Picnic.....Page 15

Announcement by Deaf Service Center “I CAN CONNECT”.....Page 16

How to Communicate Poem Book by John Lee Clark, DeafBlind.....Page 17

Infant Hearing Screening Subcommittee.....Page 18

Columbus Art Museum by Hands/Voices.....Page 19

Vote NO on August 8.....Page 20

Ohio Statehouse DeafBlind Advocacy.....Page 21

Deaf Service Center Building moved.....Page 22

Juneteenth Social with Black Deaf People.....Page 23

First Deaf Professional Registered Parliamentarian.....Page 24-25

Mark Apodace’s grandfather.....Page 26

OCRID Save Date!.....Page 27

”I am so Amazing” movie.....Page 27

ASL Storytime with Lilian Pokorny.....Page 27

Columbus Crew National Anthem: Malia Schneck and Teresa Brunott.....Page 28

ADA 33th Anniversary on July 26, 2023.....Page 28

Steve Sandy:Presenter.....Page 29

Actions Speak Louder Than Words...Shared by Freeman “Smithy” Smith.....Page 30

Next newsletter, meeting schedule.....Page 31

Contact.....Page 32

# President's Message

*Written by:* Dawn Watts *Translated by:* Megan Anderson-Christian

President's Message YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zaThuZG8aI4>

Hello! Dawn here! I am wearing a black shirt with a quartz stone necklace, Colorful glasses, pearl earrings, and a strand of hair decorated with Native American braid and beads and a feather earring.

I am very excited to tell you that the struggle of being left in the dark that DeafBlind people have been experiencing was heard by Ohio's legislature. House bill 33 will provide funding for 2 years to various organizations to help support the Deaf and Blind. Governor DeWine just signed it into law. This means deaf blind people will have SSP's/Co-navigators to help them navigate their environments. We are the third state to pass this kind of bill!

And what else!? HB 152 will require insurance companies to fully cover hearing aids for children up to the age of 21! The House of Representatives has already passed a vote on July 5<sup>th</sup>. The bill was passed by a margin of 85 to 8. The bill is now being brought to the Senate for consideration. You are able to call your senator and request that they support this bill. This will support children in need of hearing aids. There will be more to come.

Next, the ODFL board, committee, and chairperson will come to my house for a retreat. The retreat is to listen to your ideas and feedback so we can grow, and learn from you.

I would like to let you know that our board, chairperson, and officers' last term will be in December. If you are interested in becoming an officer, please reach out to me. I am happy to make a list of the people interested in the available positions. Those who are interested in a position will be required to have a nomination. We will discuss the nomination process during our next board meeting in August. Remember your members come first! Not me "the president" or the officers, we just run the meetings and make sure everything comes together. The board has agreed that we will post our meeting minutes on the website, as well as our accounting and our Zoom invites. The law 501 (c) 3 requires all nonprofits to make this important information public. You will be able to view this information on our website.

In closing, I want to say how proud I am of our friend Arlon Nash. A Black Deaf man who has grown to be so confident. He did a fantastic job giving a presentation to Black Deaf people about Juneteenth. His audience was so fascinated. At the ASLTA conference, he was presented with two awards. He has earned congratulations from you all, give him a big pat on the back. Congratulations Arlon! You can read more about his presentation further down in this newsletter.

Everything in this newsletter will be stored away in the Ohio State Library for historical preservation.

Thank you!

*Dawn K Watts*

Dawn K Watts  
ODFL President

[www.ocdclibrary.org](http://www.ocdclibrary.org)

# House Bill 33 Bill Signed by Ohio Governor

Written by: Juanita Hall Article Source: [Mike DeWine Governor of Ohio](#)

History was made on **July 4, 2023**, when “Ohio Governor Mike DeWine has signed Ohio's Fiscal Year 2024-2025 operating budget bill into law” (Mike DeWine Governor of Ohio, 2023, para. 1). The signed House Bill 33 (HB 33) allows the Deafblind people to have a new SSP/Co-Navigator Service.

Governor DeWine states, “I am proud to sign this budget, and while it makes historic investments in Ohioans across their lives...ensuring Ohioans have a high quality of life and the highest quality of care as they age, this budget helps make Ohio the heart of opportunity for everyone” (Mike DeWine Governor of Ohio, 2023, para. 4).



Photo Credit: [Mike DeWine Governor of Ohio](#)

Here are the links with more information about the HB 33

- [Mike DeWine Governor of Ohio](#)
- [Copy of the line-item veto boxed text \(PDF\)](#)
- [House Bill 33](#)

## Reference

Mike DeWine Governor of Ohio. (2023, July 5). *Governor DeWine signs FY '24-'25 budget with historic investments in Ohio's workforce, children, and communities.*

<https://governor.ohio.gov/media/news-and-media/governor-dewine-signs-fy-24-25-budget-with-historic-investments-in-ohios-workforce-children-and-communities>

# Ohio DeafBlind SSP Amendment in HB 33

*Written by:* Terry Blosser and Pickles (Dog guide)

Let me start off by saying that we are truly grateful for all of the support that we received from our family, friends, and advocates of DeafBlind (DB) Ohioans (or individuals who identify as having combined severe vision/hearing loss). Your letters of support and reaching out to your state representatives and senators do help our cause because the more people that share and advocate for us, the more letters and calls that our state legislators and the governor get the message that we need to help DB Ohioans.



The SSP amendment was introduced by Rep. Jeff LaRe, vice chairman of the House Finance Committee. The House passed HB33 and sent it to the Ohio Senate for review and revisions. At this point, in my opinion, it was a “nail-biter.” We were all nervous because the SSP amendment could be removed by anyone in the Ohio Senate. It isn’t fair but that is how politics works at times. Because of our letter-writing campaign and people reaching out to their state senators and Ohio Association of the DeafBlind members testifying before the Ohio Senate Finance Committee and Sen. Matt Dolan’s support for our amendment, it remained in the Senate’s version of HB33, which became known as Substitute HB33. After the Ohio Senate voted on and passed the Sub. HB33 bill, it went back to the Ohio House, so that they can either concur or vote not to concur with the Senate’s version. To concur or not concur is to agree with or not agree with. Historically speaking, the House most often does not concur and then the Sub. HB33 goes to a committee, which is made up of members of the Ohio House and Ohio Senate (and their staff). They then take this time to negotiate a final version of the bill and then it goes to the governor’s office for the governor’s signature to make this bill into law. Again, it was a nail-biter for all of us. We did not breathe a sigh of relief until Tuesday morning when the governor’s office announced that the governor signed the bill on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, close to midnight. Donna Schultz, the president of OADB has a FB page and Rep. LaRe posted on it “Congratulations, we did it!”

We are all very excited. This is the first time in Ohio’s history that the state legislature has passed a bill providing funding for a pilot (limited) SSP program. The plan is to provide SSP services to a limited number of eligible candidates. We need to assess just how much of an impact that SSP services will have on the lives of DB Ohioans and to provide that information to the state legislature in 2 years and request that additional funding be provided so that we can roll this out statewide. The plan is to make this program available to all of those who are eligible for SSP services, across the state of Ohio.

I want to take a moment to say “Thank you” to all of you and also, some others who have made this possible. John Filek of HKNC, Julia Felts of the Columbus Speech and Hearing Center, Art Roehrig of OADB, Dawn Watts, a DB advocate and SSP for over 40 years, Jason Judy of OADB, Bryan Grubb, VP of OADB, Donna Schultz, president of OADB as well as Disability Rights Ohio (DRO). Alexia Kemmerling of DRO was instrumental in getting our voices heard at the statehouse. She has since left DRO. I know that I may be missing some names and I’m sorry for not remembering them at this time. Just please know that we are truly appreciate of everyone’s help and support. Thank you all, so much!

Terry Blosser and Pickles, guide dog extraordinaire (Guide Dogs for the Blind)

Photo Credit: Dawn Watts



Ohio Senate  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
(614) 466-7041

**Dr. Vernon Sykes**  
Ohio State Senator  
28<sup>th</sup> Senate District

June 12, 2023

Dawn K. Watts  
Ohio Deaf Friends of the Library  
P.O. Box 917  
Worthington, Ohio 43085-0917

Dear Ms. Watts,

I am writing in response to the letters you sent me over Memorial Day weekend regarding the DeafBlind Fund in the state operating budget. First, thank you for reaching out to me in regards to this important matter. I also want to thank you and your colleagues for your thoughtful and heartfelt testimony before the Senate Finance Committee. It is important that I, and my colleagues, continue to learn the perspective and stories of Ohio citizens as we advance through this budget cycle.

I want you to know that I am a strong advocate of the DeafBlind community in Ohio, and take their wants and needs very seriously. As such, I recognize the importance for support service provider (SSP) programs to be expanded in the state of Ohio. I am also in support of launching an SSP Pilot Program to provide the full support which DeafBlind Ohioans need and deserve. It is my hope that this line-item is maintained in the Senate's version of the budget and that the expansion of SSP programs comes into fruition within the State of Ohio.

I hope to continue our conversations on this very important matter. Please do not hesitate to reach out to my office at [sykes@ohiosenate.gov](mailto:sykes@ohiosenate.gov) if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vernon Sykes".

Senator Vernon Sykes  
Ohio Senate District 28



# Disability Rights Ohio

*Written by:* Alexia Kemerling

Hello! My name is Alexia Kemerling. Over the past several months, I have had the pleasure of working with the Ohio Deaf Friends of the Library and the Ohio Association of the DeafBlind in their journey to establish statewide SSP Services.

I first met Dawn Watts and Art Roerhig while I was working at Disability Rights Ohio. My role was as a Community Engagement Coordinator on the policy team. I worked to support disabled people in getting involved in advocacy at the state level. In the summer of 2022, I hosted congressional meet and greets around the state. Art and Dawn sent me an email saying that DeafBlind Ohioans needed to talk with legislators – and so, I set up our first meeting!

Dawn and Art connected me to an incredible team of advocates including Donna Schultz, Terry Blosser, Bryan Grubb, Jason Judy, John Filek (of Helen Keller National Center), [Julia Felts](#) (Columbus Speech and Hearing), and many more. Together, we developed a strategy to introduce a bill to create a statewide support service person program for DeafBlind Ohioans.

My role in this process was to share my knowledge on the legislative process. I advised the group on key legislators to meet with, how to form talking points, which state agencies to work with, and most importantly how and when to testify at the statehouse.

Working with this group was an amazing experience. Each person brought different experiences, ideas, and perspectives to the table. Together we navigated complicated conversations about how to build the most inclusive program possible, how to honor and respect past experiences, and how to make sure we were good partners to each other – communicating and listening. To be effective advocates, you must also be good team members.

I have worked with many different advocacy groups, but this group amazed me at how dedicated and motivated they were. Legislative work is tiring. It can be periods of waiting, periods of uncertainty, and periods of rushing to solve complex problems quickly. It takes a lot of time and work to educate legislators. Yet, the Ohio Association of the DeafBlind and their allies should up again and again to do the work. They made such an impression on legislators, and even got statehouse news coverage and quotes from state leadership on their work – this is HUGE! It is so rare that a grassroots effort makes these kinds of waves. This group is incredibly humble, so I need to stress just how amazing they are.

This experience was also special for me because I am hard of hearing, with hearing aids in both ears. I grew up in the hearing community, but have recently begun learning more about the Deaf community. I am taking ASL courses at Columbus State. Getting to practice my ASL with the Deaf and DeafBlind community, as well as getting to learn a bit about Deaf history and culture from these Ohio leaders has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my life. I am so grateful for them.

Recently, I accepted a new position at the American Association of People with Disabilities, based in Washington D.C., where I'll be focused on building the power of the disability vote. While I am leaving Ohio policy, I am definitely not leaving behind the lessons I learned from working with this community – nor the connections I've made. I plan to continue to engage with the Deaf and DeafBlind community in my new job. One organization I am planning to partner with is SignVote, <https://signvote.org/>, a group that provides election resources in ASL. I am also interested in partnering with DeafBlind advocates to educate and train poll workers and election officials on access needs. Everyone has the right to vote, and everyone's vote matters. Together, we will build our power! If you are interested in voting rights work and civic engagement, please feel free to reach out to me! My email is [akemerling@aapd.com](mailto:akemerling@aapd.com).

# House Bill 152


*Written by:* Dawn Watts

**VOTED and PASSED H.B. 152 by House of Reps 85 to 8**

**Now, this bill is now on Senator** HB 152 to require insurance coverage for pediatric hearing aids.

**Call your Senators and ask for support.**

**Ohio House of Representatives**



**Rules and Reference Committee**  
Speaker Jason Stephens, Chair

**Rules Report**

The House Rules and Reference committee met on Tuesday, June 20, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

The following matters, being properly before the committee and pursuant to House Rule 66, were scheduled for third consideration on the House calendar in the order indicated below for the date indicated below.

Wednesday, June 21, 2023

**H. B. No. 152 Weinstein, Young, B.** – To require health plan issuers to cover hearing aids and related services for persons twenty-one years of age and younger and to name this act Madeline's Law.

**H. B. No. 205 Swearingen, Plummer, et al.** – To enact the High Hazard Training Certification (HHTC) Act regarding construction services performed under a contract at a stationary source.  
*\*Pending Report*

**H. B. No. 117 Manning, Robinson, et al.** – To eliminate retention under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, to expand the grades for which intensive reading intervention is provided, and expand the inclusion of phonics in learning standards.

**S. B. No. 16 Wilson, et al.** – To alter the law governing immunity from liability for donations of perishable food.  
*\*Pending Report*

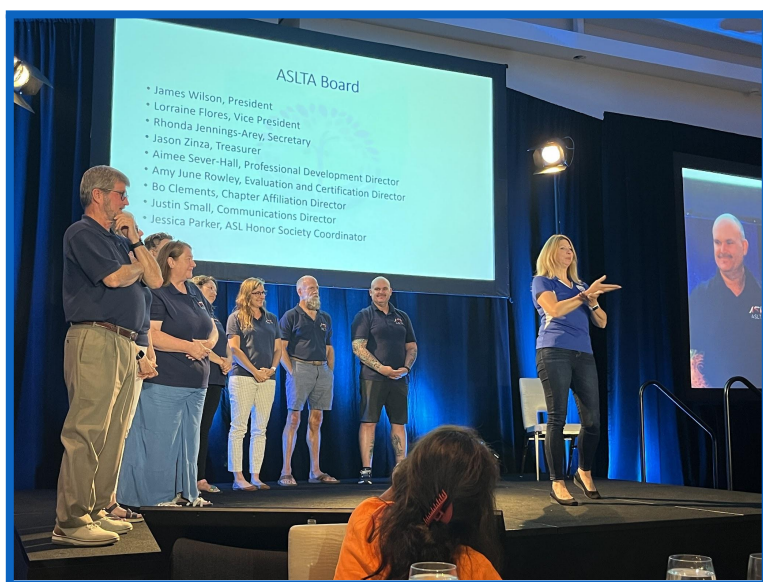
# ASLTA Conference in Columbus, Ohio

*Written by: The Deaf Reader Staff*

The American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA) had its 12th Biennial National Professional Development Conference this past June 28th - July 1st in Columbus, Ohio at the Hilton Hotel Downtown Columbus. It was a great success with over 300 people in attendance to participate in its many workshops and various activities. There were over thirty workshops and presenters who gave thought-provoking presentations. There were fun activities for the participants to enjoy such as special interests groups, a Deaf art gallery, sponsor booths, a silent auction, an ASL revitalization night, a Sign 'n' Paint, a Deaf Art tour, and more!

During the Opening Ceremony on Wednesday, June 28th, special recognition was given to honor David Martin, the ASLTA's Communication Director. In loving memory, his ASLTA polo shirt was placed on an empty chair on stage.

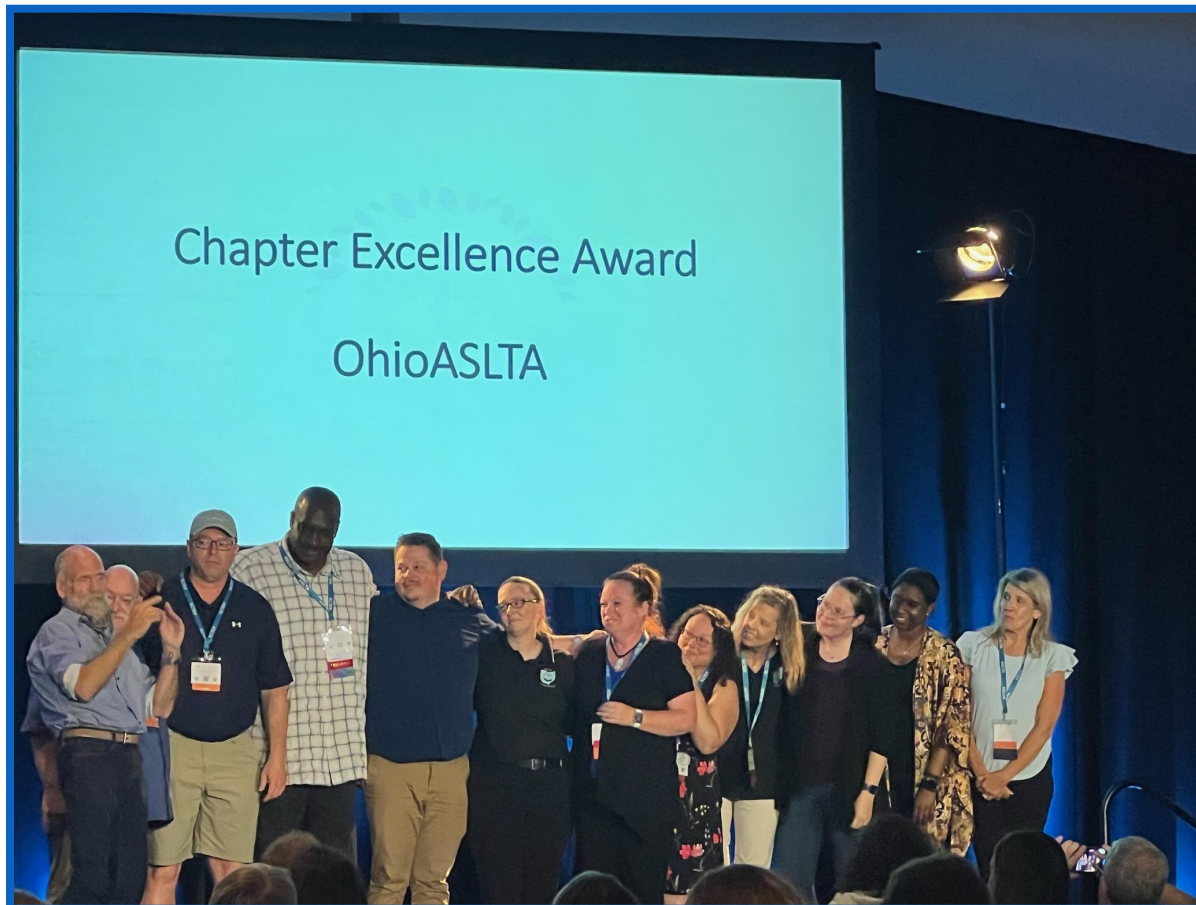
## Open Ceremony Honor David Martin, Communication



Left Picture: ASLTA Board Right Picture: Popular workshop on Black ASL given by Roxanne Dummett



During the Closing Ceremony on Saturday night, July 1st various awards were given out. One of the awards was given to the OhioASLTA for the Chapter Excellence Award, which is a high honor. “This award is presented to an ASLTA chapter whose leaders and members have done an outstanding job in increasing membership, promoting fundraising, providing professional development activities, and promoting ASLTA” (Chapter Excellence Award, n.d., para. 5 ).



## ASLTA Program book is in the State Library of Ohio for anyone to read.

Reference

Chapter Excellence Award. (n.d.). *ASLTA awards*. ASLTA | American Sign Language Teachers Association. <https://aslta.org/aslta-awards/>

# RED, WHITE, and BOOM! AWARDS – ARLON NASH!

*Written by:* Dawn Watts and Juanita Hall

During the ASLTA Conference, Arlon Nash was awarded two awards! He first received the ASLHS Teacher High School of the Year and the George Veditz Award! The American Sign Language Honor Society (ASLHS) presented this special award to Arlon Nash in recognition of his many years of outstanding service as an ASL educator.



Mr. Nash also received a second award, the prestigious George Veditz Award! “This award honors George W. Veditz (1861 – 1937), NAD President remembered for his courageous leadership, advocacy, and efforts to preserve ASL by spearheading a film project that has had lasting influence.



Given to an individual in recognition of significant contributions to the field of ASL. This is the most prestigious ASLTA award presented to individuals in the field of ASL education. Recipients are not necessarily members of ASLTA” (George Veditz Award, n.d., para. 4). Congratulations Arlon!



<https://asлта.org/asлта-awards/>

[▶ ASLTA Conference Arlon Nash](#)

Photo Credits: Dawn Watts

## Reference

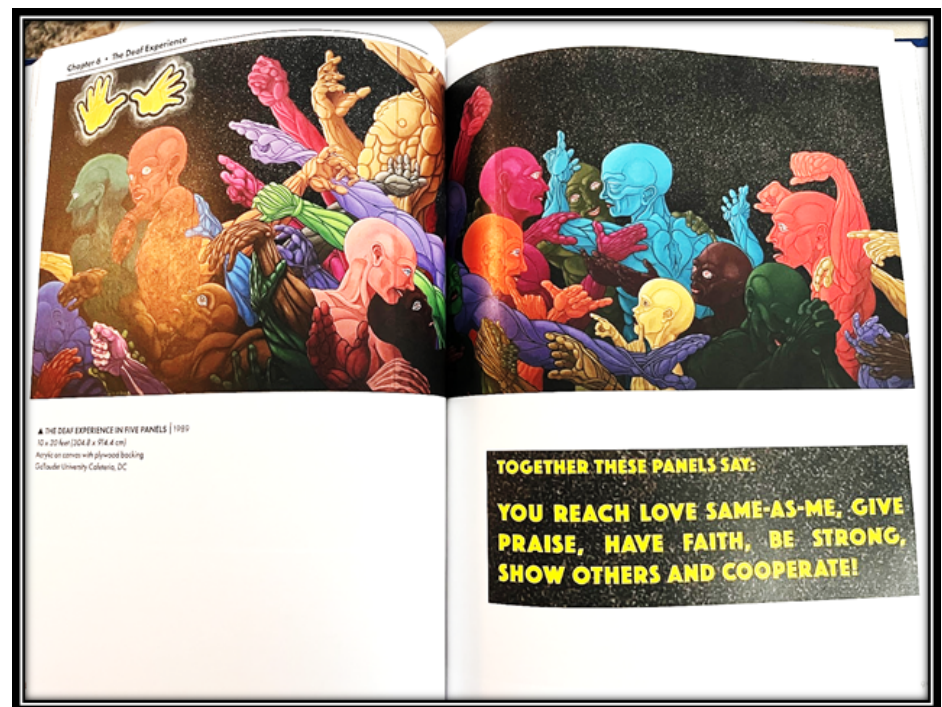
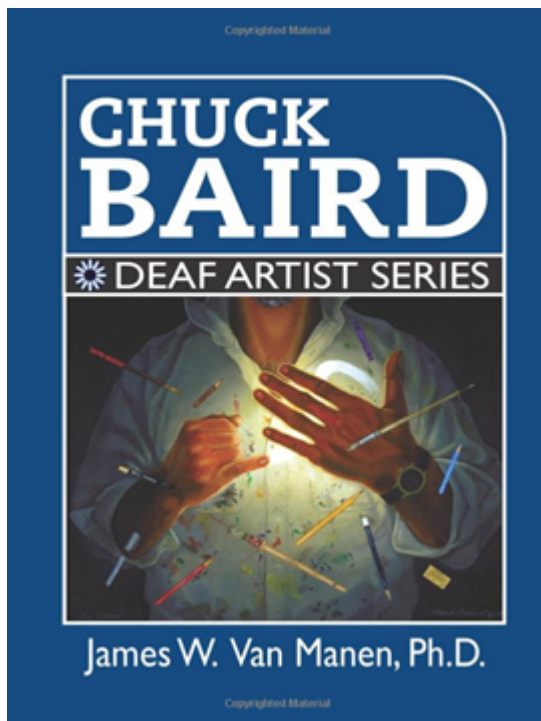
George Veditz Award. (n.d.). *ASLTA awards*. ASLTA | American Sign Language Teachers Association. <https://asлта.org/asлта-awards/>

# Chuck Baird Deaf Artist Book

*Written by:* The Deaf Reader Staff

Check this book out! This Chuck Baird Deaf Artist series book contains many of Chuck's De'VIA paintings along with their symbolic descriptions. Chuck is known as the "King of De'VIA!" (Chuck Baird: Deaf Artist Series, 2022, para. 2). This book is available on Amazon: [Chuck Baird: Deaf Artist Series - Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/Chuck-Baird-Deaf-Artist-Series/dp/1958592072)

Enjoy browsing through this beautiful book!



Photos Credit: Left photo: Amazon.com Right photo: Dawn Watts

## Reference

Chuck Baird: Deaf Artist Series. (2022, August 28). Amazon.

[https://www.amazon.com/Chuck-Baird-James-Manen-Ph-D/dp/1958592072/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=2PHQU5YDKMO55&keywords=chuck+baird&qid=1688933651&srefix=chuck+baird%2Caps%2C183&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Chuck-Baird-James-Manen-Ph-D/dp/1958592072/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2PHQU5YDKMO55&keywords=chuck+baird&qid=1688933651&srefix=chuck+baird%2Caps%2C183&sr=8-1)

# 100th Anniversary Columbus Speech & Hearing

*Written by:* Mollie Hannon, Communication Director *Reprint Permission:* Mollie Hannon

On June 26th, we celebrated a significant milestone at Columbus Speech & Hearing (CSH). We celebrated our 100th Anniversary and hosted a special luncheon to mark the occasion. Presented by Grange Insurance and emceed by NBC4's Jerod Smalley, the event was a true celebration of our legacy. CSH welcomed over 200 friends, colleagues, donors, and partners at the Renaissance Downtown to honor our impact over the past century.

The event reflected on the humble beginnings of a committed group of individuals who aimed to assist and provide resources to hard-of-hearing and deaf individuals and how that purpose has expanded to serve a large number of people today. Special thanks to Keynote Speaker Kelly O'Reilly for sharing her family's experience with CSH and how our advocacy efforts have positively impacted the community. Additionally, Debbie Freece, a client, shared her story of three generations receiving services from CSH. It was truly heartwarming to hear how much our work has influenced the lives of so many people over the years.

Our goal of raising \$10,000 was surpassed, thanks to the generous donations from those in attendance. In addition, CEO James Dye announced the relaunching of the 1923 Society! The 1923 Society is a planned giving initiative to allow CSH supporters to further their support for generations.

Columbus Speech & Hearing could only be where we are today, looking toward a bright and strong future with the support of our staff, board, donors and the community. Here's to another 100 years!

Website: <https://columbusspeech.org/category-great-communicators-luncheon/>

## Anne Bodette - Deaf Catholic Parishioners in Toledo to bridge language barriers - The Toledo Blade

<https://www.toledoblade.com/news/religion/2023/06/18/waiting-sign-deaf-parishioners-press-diocese-language-barrier/stories/20230618012> by Sarah Readdean





# WELCOME TO OHIO SERVICE DOG AWARENESS WEEK

OBSERVED THE LAST WEEK OF JULY  
COURTESY OF CHRIS COOLEY

## JULY 28TH: DINNER

- Chocolate Café (1855 Northwest Blvd. Columbus, OH)
- 6pm-9:30pm

## JULY 29TH: THE WALK

- Corner of Broad and High (near the Ohio Statehouse)
- 10am



### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

- Volunteers are needed to assist during the walk



- ASL interpreters will be available at all events



- Chris Cooley is in need of non-monetary donations such as food, beverages, dog gear, etc.

### CONTACT CHRIS COOLEY



CHRISCOOLEY40@GMAIL.COM

### NO PET DOGS AT ANY EVENTS

## YES!!!!

### You Can Help Service Dogs And Their Teams!!

Are you interested in donating or becoming more involved to help Service Dogs fulfill their mission to serve?

#### 3 SIMPLE WAYS TO SHOW US YOUR HEART

##### 1. MONETARY DONATIONS

Guide/Service Dog Night Out Group is not able to accept monetary donations at this time. BUT, we all benefit from donations made to the following Service Dog agencies that make Ohio their home.

- \* 4 Paws for Ability- <http://www.4pawsforability.org/donate-now/>
- \* Pilot Dogs, Inc.- <http://www.pilotdogs.org/donate-now>
- \* Guiding Eyes for the Blind- <http://www.guidingeyes.org/ways-to-help/>
- \* Canine Companions for Independence- <http://www.cci.org/donate/>

##### 2. ITEM DONATIONS

###### WHAT?

- Toys
- Treats
- Potty Bags
- Leashes
- Food/Water Bowls

###### Who?

The above organizations are able to provide guidance on what is most needed. Many are happy to take items to use in the training of future service dogs. Guide/Service Dog Night Out Group will occasionally take small dog items to use as giveaways during outings.

##### 3. TIME DONATIONS

You can make a difference by donating your time to:

- Any of the organizations listed above
- Becoming a puppy trainer/caregiver to a future Service Dog
- Join us on our Guide/Service Dog Night Out Group. Meet up with us to show your support

## Ohio GUAA Potluck Picnic

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
Blendon Woods Metro Park  
Dogwood Shelter  
4265 E. Dublin Granville Road  
Columbus, OH. 43081

11:00 AM to 12:00 PM—General Meeting

12:00 PM to 4:00 PM—CHOW TIME!

GUAA Buckeye will provide hamburgers/hot dogs with buns plus bottled water.



If your last name begins with the following letters, please bring cover dishes:

A-E-L-Q-V: Any kind of salads

B-J-K-M-R-W: Sides/Desserts


C-F-I-N-P-S-X: Casseroles

D-H-O-U-T-Y-Z: Fruits/Vegetables


There will be electrical outlets at the picnic shelter for those that bring crockpot foods. For more information or to RSVP, send an email to Mark Byrd @ [markbyrdthecoder@gmail.com](mailto:markbyrdthecoder@gmail.com)


See you there!

## *YouTube: ASL Translation iCanConnect*



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 6/16/2023  
 Deaf Services Center  
 Shannon Seger, Co-Interim Executive Director  
 614.841.1991  
 info@dsc.org





iCanConnect  
 Heading to Ohio En-Compass

DSC and Ohio En-compass are pleased to announce that the iCanConnect (iCC) Program will be moving to Ohio En-Compass (OEC). This opportunity ensures continuous services for our DeafBlind community and the program's future success without any gaps in services.

iCC is a National program that offers free equipment and training to qualifying individuals with hearing and vision loss. Ohio En-Compass will be the local contact that helps Ohioans stay connected with their loved ones and the world.

Effective July 1, 2023, DSC will no longer be handling iCC Services. We understand that change can be challenging, and we are committed to providing support during this transition period.

For further details and assistance regarding the iCC program, kindly get in touch with Jennifer Smith-Dudash through email at [jsmith-dudash@ohioencompass.com](mailto:jsmith-dudash@ohioencompass.com) or by calling 614.496.9712. Our community members deserve only the best, and DSC fully supports this transition under the leadership and expertise of Jennifer.

###

**About Deaf Services Center:** 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization; We empower those with language barriers by promoting access to communication. Our resources help those with hearing loss or non-English users fully access the English language in communicating with others. Headquartered in central Ohio, with satellite offices serving the northwest and southeast areas of the state, DSC is the largest provider of services for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf-Blind in Ohio.

**About Ohio En-Compass.** The team's mission is to empower individuals to reach their goals through employment. Ohio En-Compass provides deaf and hard of hearing people with the tools to find their best paths forward. Services for vocational rehabilitation occur in Franklin, Delaware, and Union.

DSC Main Office: Central | DSC Northwest | DSC Southern  
 614.841.1991 [www.dsc.org](http://www.dsc.org)



# *How to Communicate* Poem Book by John Lee Clark, DeafBlind

*Written by:* John Lee Clark

This note is to share the news that my poetry book *How to Communicate* has won the Minnesota Book Award. Many of you here have been and still are a great encouragement to me and are responsible for making those poems possible. Thank you!

Amazon:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/132403534X>

Barnes & Noble:

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/how-to-communicate-john-lee-clark/1140914172>

Bookshop:

<https://bookshop.org/books/how-to-communicate-poems/9781324035343>

Indiebound:

<https://www.indiebound.org/book/9781324035343->

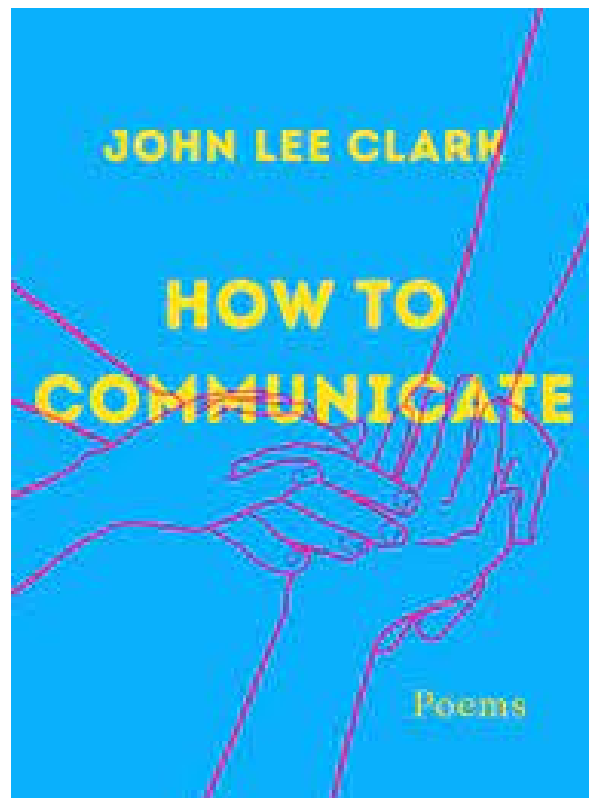


Photo Credit: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

# Infant Hearing Screening Subcommittee - Application for New Members

*Written by:* Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Child and Family Health *Reprint Permission:* Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Child and Family Health

The Infant Hearing Screening Subcommittee (IHSS) is a standing committee of the Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH) Medical Advisory Council (MAC). The subcommittee is composed of a multidisciplinary group of individuals who are committed to improving the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program in Ohio. Topics discussed include infant hearing screening, diagnosis of childhood hearing loss and enrollment in early intervention.

We welcome your interest in the subcommittee and hope you take this opportunity to apply for membership and join us in our mission.

The IHSS meets 4 times a year. These meetings are held in-person on Fridays between the hours of 10AM and 2:00PM in Columbus, Ohio. During these meetings, members are encouraged to share their expertise, knowledge, and experiences as well as offer recommendations for establishing effective protocols to identify infants and toddlers with hearing loss through hospital hearing screenings and follow-up hearing evaluations. Our primary goal is to improve communication, language, and social-emotional outcomes for Ohio's children diagnosed with hearing loss by referring them to early intervention services.

It is the expectation that full voting IHSS members attend and participate in all formal meetings unless an unavoidable conflict arises. Full voting members serve a 3-year term. In addition to your participation during subcommittee meetings, some work may be completed in small group/virtual meetings outside of the 4 set meetings.

To apply for membership, please use this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/D9JHSCB>

## Free admissions at the Columbus Art Museum on July



15th for Families with Deaf/Hard of hearing children!

Click on the link below for more information and registration!

[https://mailchi.mp/5eacd106047d/family-outing-at-the-columbus-museum-of-art?fbclid=IwAR28Lk4\\_xNBTZThn5HxY27hwCUXi0P8SQ6Vxjp23r50iH6EPRChhjDO68oM](https://mailchi.mp/5eacd106047d/family-outing-at-the-columbus-museum-of-art?fbclid=IwAR28Lk4_xNBTZThn5HxY27hwCUXi0P8SQ6Vxjp23r50iH6EPRChhjDO68oM)

# Vote NO on August 8th!

*Written by:* Patricia Cangelosi-Williams *YouTube:* [ASL Translation: Vote NO](#)

Friends and Family:

I write today to ask you to **vote NO on August 8** on a constitutional amendment placed on the ballot by the Ohio General Assembly that will shred majority rule. Instead of 50% to pass an amendment, including those initiated by citizens, it will require going forward 60% for passage. This amendment ends majority rule so they can get what they want instead of what we, the people want.

***I'm asking you to Vote NO in August because if this passes it would mean 40% of voters could block every initiative that the majority of Ohioans want.***

The Cleveland Plain Dealer editors said, “*This is the most sinister plot in the history of Ohio voters,*” and that voting for this amendment would mean “*You are giving away your seat at the table.*”

Tom Suddes, a reporter writing in the Plain Dealer and Columbus Dispatch, frames what is at stake this way:

*“The stakes on Aug. 8, when Ohioans will approve or reject State Issue 1, are clear: Should the voters rule Ohio — or should a gerrymandered General Assembly call all the shots [by making it harder for Ohio voters \(regardless of party\) to set Ohio’s constitutional compass?](#)”*

*Ohioans faced that very question 111 years ago. They answered it by guaranteeing voters’ right to propose and approve amendments to the Ohio Constitution by petition, without going first on bended knees to the General Assembly.”*

This initiative to kill majority rule was put on the August ballot by the General Assembly even though they have outlawed these elections because they know turnout is so low in August. They hope they can sneak it through.

We must inform, educate, and turn out every NO voter in Ohio in an obscure special election to preserve and protect majority rule.

## **Key Dates for the August 8 Election:**

July 10: Voter Registration Deadline – <https://www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/>

July 11: Early Voting Begins

August 1: Absentee Ballot Request Deadline

August 8: Election Day

To request an absentee ballot: <https://www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/how-to-request-your-absentee-ballot/>

To learn about new voter identification requirements to vote: <https://www.lwvohio.org/ohiovotingchanges>

The VoteNoInAugust website: <https://votenoinaugust.org>

# Ohio Statehouse - DeafBlind Advocacy

*Written by:* Dawn Watts & Art Roehrig *Video by:* Dawn Watts

May 26th, 2023

Dawn in Ohio Statehouse. Yesterday, I showed your letters from Deafblind people and Advocacy people to the Senate Finance Committee. This early morning I had to organize your letters to your local Senators office because I was so busy with my schedules for the weeks. So, I dropped your letters off. All done! Here is The Senate Chamber where the final HB 33 will vote next month. What a lovely blue!!! Happy Memorial Day weekend! Again thanks for your support letters!

May 25th, 2023: [HB 33 with Senator Finance Committee on May 25, 2023](#)

Dawn: This early morning, Art announced the Senate Finance Committee who listen to the HB 33: DeafBlind Fund for Support Service Provider (SSP). There was about 13 Senates committee. Anyway, we just finished our lunch. We want to let you know that Donna Schultz was giving her testimony about her history experience of vision loss, with the training of types of equipment for her visions, and her self-esteem increasing. Next, Art Roehrig expressed his experience living in DC and Maryland and Helen Keller had her "Support Service Provider" Ann Sullivan for a long time.

Last, they warned me for only 3 minutes left to make a testimony, Shoot! So I had to omit some messages because Donna and Art s testimony was similar to mine. I tried to make several good points that Ohio is not like other states for the SSP service. It created more problems for the DeafBlind people with communication barriers and many issues. In Ohio, DeafBlind people are so thrilled to know about the HB 33: DeafBlind Fund for SSP but I am asking for more money for SSP. (HB 33: DeafBlind Fund for SSP, awarded 100,000 for a year, 10 DeafBlind Clients for 16 hours a month, not enough for 180 DeafBlind people who were in the HKNC training, Ohio Census 85,000 we requested more money, 100,000.) I have many letters from DeafBlind people who signed letters to you, Senators. They did not have any access to reading on the computer or sending their letters and I had to help them. Showed 2 inches letters to the Senate Committee. They paid their tax to Ohio and looked at the "voice" letters.

We left and we were told that hearing people felt that our testimonies were very powerful. I want to say Thanks to you, DeafBlind people, and Advocacy people for supporting and writing letters to the Senators. Dawn asked Art if he wants to say in a short message.

Art: Hello, Yes, Dawn is right. I was happy to give the opportunity to explain how important to have SSP training. There are so many SSPs who did not know what to do. They did not understand DeafBlindness and many issues, too. We told Senators that we need more money for SSP. DeafBlind people have different issues and prefer to have training for SSP. We are hoping for good news, wish us good lucks.



# Deaf Services Center's Relocation Plans

*Written by:* Cheryl Prusinski *Video by:* Cheryl Prusinski

YouTube Video: [Deaf Services Center Announcement by Cheryl Prusinski](#)

\*\*\*Special Announcement from the DSC's Board of Directors\*\*\*

I am a white woman with short, curly, grey hair and brown circle earrings wearing a black outfit. The background is orange.

My name is Cheryl Prusinski. I am a board member of the Deaf Services Center (DSC) in Worthington (Columbus) Ohio.

We are excited to let you know if you remember in my last vlog, we were investigating, discussing, and making sure we have the tools and resources for agency operation. The finances and programs are in place. We feel this time we are ready for new future directions and changes. We are ready to announce that we will put up the DSC building for sale. The timing is good as DSC's future and vision need to be aligned with today's climate. DSC building is antiquated. Technology is outdated. The building is not accessible for people using wheelchairs.

After a lengthy discussion, we decided now is the right time to sell the building and move to a new building in downtown Columbus. The new building has many non-profit organizations sharing office spaces. I personally toured the building with Shannon Seger, interim co-CEO and Mike Repas, Board member. We were impressed with what we saw. The United Way is responsible for managing this project called the Community Impact Center. Different non-profit organizations are using various spaces on different floors. We have shared our preference for office space that matches DSC's vision for the future. We are excited and looking forward to what the future will bring us. We believe the future looks bright and hopeful.

Recently, Shannon posted a vlog announcing a new position for Director of Community Resources. We are looking forward to receiving applications for the position. Those who are qualified are encouraged to apply.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, Mike Repas, Bill McGee, Shannon Seger or Megan Menikheim.

# Juneteenth Social with Black Deaf People

*Written by:* Aileen Reusche, MSW, Social Services Case Manager in Cleveland Community Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

On June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023 the Deaf community gathered to celebrate Juneteenth. We met at St. Augustine Catholic Club for the Deaf in the basement. This celebration was in Cleveland in the Tremont district near Lincoln Park which had a nice playground for the children to play outside. It was a nice cool day in the 70s and no rain was in the forecast. It was well attended with close to 70 people coming to celebrate this holiday with some hearing ASL students mingling with the Deaf community. We served fried chicken with side dishes. The community contributed with a dish to share. A video made by Arlon Nash and a PowerPoint presentation by Dawn Watts was given. This was hosted and celebrated by the Black Deaf community in Cleveland OH, and other cities with sponsoring support from the Community Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at Cleveland Hearing and Speech Center.

More history of Juneteenth was shared to help the Deaf community to

understand why this holiday was important. It was signed into a federal holiday by

President Biden in the year of 2021. It is slowly gaining popularity and a deeper understanding. It first started to be a celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 to free enslaved Black people held in the Confederacy. Black people were finally freed from slavery in Texas two years later. People started to move towards the North and West which was called the Second Great Migration from the South to gain freedom and start a new life. We do have a long journey in front of us since this was nationally recognized as a federal holiday three years ago. More and more companies are starting to recognize this and give the day off to employees. Healing is starting to happen in many communities in the USA.  
Photo Credit: Dawn K Watts



**Arlon Nash YouTube:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ng\\_YiXC\\_kf0&t=294](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ng_YiXC_kf0&t=294)

# First Deaf Professional Registered Parliamentarian

*Written by:* Mark Apodaca

I was born hearing until the age of 5 and became deaf due to spinal meningitis. He started to read before I was five. It was my mother who worked with and encouraged me. About Riverside, as my father told me, California School for the Deaf, Riverside which was established in 1953 sent representatives to my parent's home to talk to them about having me attending the school. That was in 1959 or 1960. My father was not in support of it because (1) I was the oldest child and male (2) our Hispanic/Latino culture kept the family together, and (3) he believed I could succeed in public schools. Santa Monica, California to Riverside was about 75 miles and there were no freeways. My father knew Riverside County because he served in the US Air Force at March Air Force Base. I was born in Corona, California, not far from the base.

I started to learn sign language in the fall of 1972 while taking a class at Golden West College. In 2002, I was honored with the Pilar of Achievement Award for my success in business and financial management and community services. Picture of GWC students (can you find me?) and I am standing next to the award. I am the only deaf alumni to reach that status.

Mark Apodaca currently serves as a Professional Registered Parliamentarian (PRP) of the National Association of Parliamentarians (NAP) and a member of the American Institute of Parliamentarians (AIP). He has served as the parliamentarian for international, national, state, and local organizations and provides training workshops in parliamentary law and procedures as well as board governance training. In 2019, he became the first deaf PRP in NAP's 90-year history. He was also a candidate for board treasurer in 2021.

Since 1983, he has served on more than 25 national, state, and local nonprofit organization boards and helped form more than 15 nonprofit organizations, limited liability companies, and corporations. In addition to his interest in parliamentary law, nonprofit finance, nonprofit organization board governance and leadership are other areas of interest.

Another area of interest is personal finance and financial literacy. He founded the National Institute of Financial Literacy for the Deaf aka DEAFinance and has given workshops in the different areas of personal finance.



Mark has been in the Accounting/Finance profession for more than 45 years. He was a Head of Finance at Hughes Aircraft Company having worked with the company for nearly 16 years, Director of Finance at the Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness and Communication Service for the Deaf for 13 years combined and begins his 18th year at the New Mexico School for the Deaf as the school's Director of Finance and Chief Procurement Officer. He also serves as the Chief Financial Officer of Global Technical Communications, LLC. Mark was a financial accounting instructor at UCLA for two years and hopes to return to teaching someday.

A native Californian, Mark received his Associate in Arts degree from Golden West College, his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and MBA from Pepperdine University, a graduate Certificate in Accounting from UCLA and a Certificate in Government Contract Management. He also studied finance and nonprofit organization management.

Mark is the founder of DEAFinance, LLC, FINLION Accounting and Income Tax Service, LLC, and FINLION Consulting Group, LLC. He is also one of the core founders of the National Society of Hispanic MBAs which has more than 25,000 members.

Mark and his wife, Marla, reside in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and have three children and seven grandchildren.



**Libby Pollard, Former NAD President and Certification  
Parliamentarian**

**Mark Apodaca, Former NAD Board member**

**Photo Credit: Mark A. in Columbus Colony Elderly  
Care, Westerville, Ohio.**

# Mark Apodaca's Grandfather

<https://www.evergreenmuseum.org/exhibit/the-spruce-goose/>

500 Northeast Captain Michael King Smith Way, McMinnville, OR 97128

 **The Aviator (6/6) Movie CLIP - The Spruce Goose Flies (2004) HD**

front row from left to right, third in the back row Antonio "Momo" Apodaco



# Ohio Chapter of the Registry of Interpreter for the Deaf

Save the Date!

OCRID’s Annual Interpreting Conference will be held from Thursday, October 26th to Saturday, October 28th at Columbus State Community College.

## I’m So Amazing: Movie

The film “I’m So Amazing” will be shown in Canton on September 30th. from 1 pm to 5 pm. Deaf Outreach Church, North Canton, Ohio. It highlights the life and literature works of Angie Orlando who is a woman, DeafBlind and lives in Northeast Ohio. Free and open to the public (film has captions)

More information, email: [amazingfilm2020@gmail.com](mailto:amazingfilm2020@gmail.com)

**ASL Storytime**  
 At the Coventry Village Branch  
 With Liliana Pokorny

**SATURDAY • JULY 29 • 11 AM**

Come celebrate Deaf culture at Coventry Village Branch Library with deaf storyteller Liliana Pokorny as she presents an ASL storytime and story crafts!

An interpreter will be provided.

Books featured: *Max Learns Sign Language*, *Sign Language ABC*, *Signs & Rhymes*, *Sue for Actions*

## 33th Anniversary American Disabilities Act Awareness Week



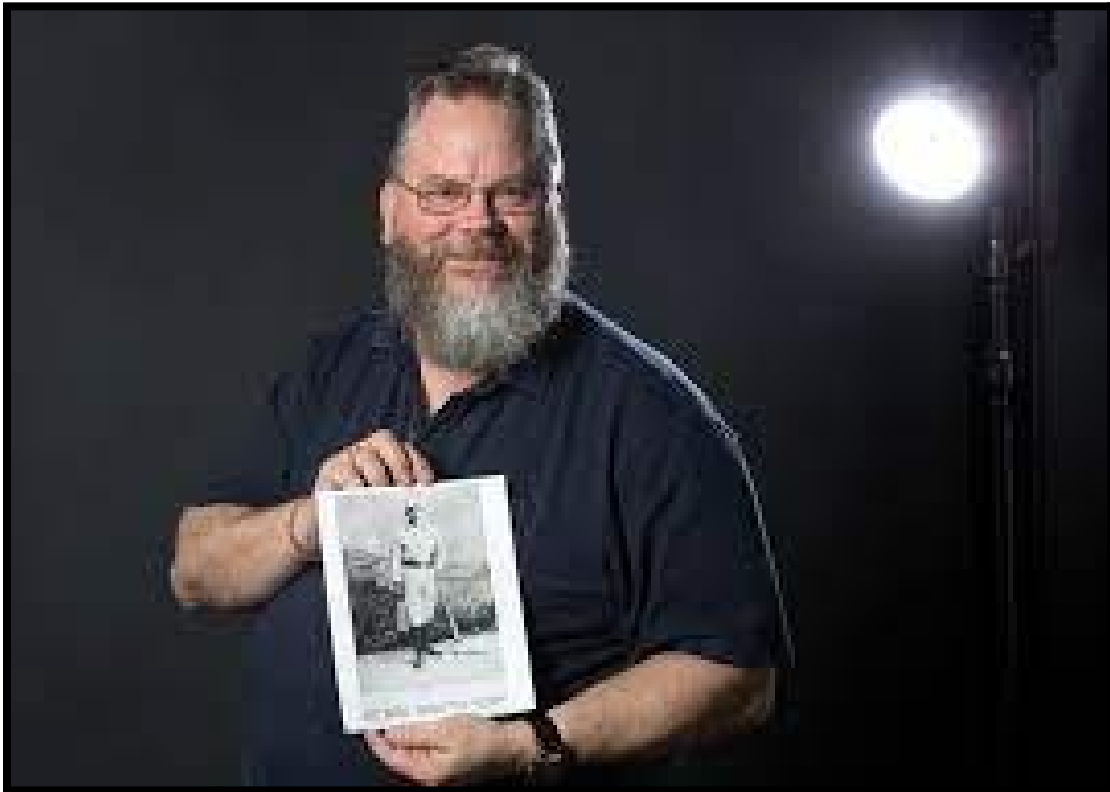
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990 by President George H.W. Bush. Throughout the year and on the ADA Anniversary (July 26), the ADA National Network recognizes this landmark event and the important work to promote equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

## Columbus Crew National Anthem

More deaf people signed the ASL National Anthem in the stadium. On July 8, 2023, Malia Schneck and Teresa Brunotte, Former Miss Deaf Ohio on July 8, 2023. Congratulations!

## Steve Sandy - William “Dummy” Hoy

Any high schools or colleges/universities that are interested in having Steve Sandy present on William “Dummy” Hoy, please contact him for an invitation. His email address [dmyhoy@gmail.com](mailto:dmyhoy@gmail.com).



# Actions Speaks Louder Than Words...

## Shared by Freeman “Smitty” Smith

*Written by:* Rolland Doudt, OSDAA Contributing Editor

Not a whisper was made when former Ohio Deaf alumnus gave the presentation of 43-year journey in this profession he shared with the audiences at the Ohio School for the Deaf Alumni Association’s 58<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention, July 24<sup>th</sup> at Columbus Colony Community Center, Westerville, Oh.

Freeman “Smitty” Smith, former OSD alumnus member (1955-’57) alias “Smitty the Clown” shared clowning journey in front huge audiences. There was not much activity around the building once “Smitty” story was told from rough to prosper journey, interpreted by his son, Freeman Smith Jr. Aladdin Shrine representative, Mike “Buckhead” Clark also shared Freeman “Smitty” journey he had worked thru the clown shows. Ron Opatich was interpreting what Mr. Clark addressed with 7-minute video clip of his showing in face painting, tramp costumes and the trophies he collected. He was two-time world champ clown at International Shrine Clown Association in 1982.



The following year “Smitty” placed 7 honors in 1<sup>st</sup> place under different categories, Tramp with gimmick, Tramp costume and makeup, and Circus World (with Zor Temple Shrine of Madison, Wis.) Smitty was honored to be inducted in the Shrine Hall of Fame in 1986.



Ronald Patterson, Award chairperson presented the “Civic Award Service” plaque to Freeman Smith as one of great notable civic service he had contributed. At same time, the audiences and Ron wore red circus clown noses with standing loud applauded. What a night we had witnessed. The collection of trophies and posters were displayed.

Tireless leader, Elwin Babb Convention Chairman donated three personalized canvas wall arts of “Smith the Clown”. Kathy Kline won canvas wall photo from the drawing, other 12”x12” canvas goes Freeman in appreciation of his time he spent with the Association. In addition wall canvas photograph is to be hung at the OSDAA showcase along 18” inch clown shoes. In future trophies will be displayed.

His quote he emphases, *“My journey as a clown was my love of making people laugh my humble beginnings a son of a coal miner. I was the only deaf person in my family so I needed to act out my communication without using sign language when young. I believe that allowed me to be so animated. I fell in love with clowning with the Shrine. It was so rewarding and I hope I made people smile and make their day it was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life...--Freeman “Smitty” Smith*

Freeman “Smitty” Smith  
Two-Time World  
Champ Clown



**If you have any issues regarding this newsletter, please contact the Director, Editor, or Co-Editor at [TheDeafReader@gmail.com](mailto:TheDeafReader@gmail.com)**

ODFL Board meeting/Retreat on August 12 at Dawn Watts' house

Ohio Alliance Organization meeting on September 27, 2023, by Zoom.  
(Minutes meeting on the website: [www.OCDC.library.org](http://www.OCDC.library.org))

## Contact Information

### *The Deaf Reader*

Ohio Deaf Friends of the Library  
(ODFL) website:

<https://www.ocdclibrary.org/>

ODFL email:

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

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P.O. Box 917  
Worthington, Ohio 43085-0917

WE STRIVE FOR ALL  
LIBRARIES TO BE  
MADE ACCESSIBLE  
TO ALL THE DEAF  
COMMUNITIES IN  
THE STATE OF OHIO

### Standing Committees

**Ohio Deaf History Month (March 13 to April 15<sup>th</sup>)**

Debbie Brown (Chairperson)

**Ohio Deaf Culture Digital Library Task Force**

Ohio Alliance Organizations (Professional)

**Library Advisor**

Allison Ratcliff

**Librarian for Deaf**

Ben Gulyas

**Coventry Village – Heights Public Library**

Ben Gulyas

**Deaf Mentor Program**

Marsha Moore (Chairperson)

**Specialist DeafBlind**

Donna Schultz

**Bylaws**

**The Deaf Reader Newsletter**

Dawn Watts, Megan Anderson Christian, and Juanita Hall

**Legislative Advisor**

#### Northwest 1 Representatives Lori Luk and Ann Bodette

Allen, Auglaize, Crawford, Defiance, Eric, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Lucas, Mercer, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Van Wert, Williams, Wyandot, Wood

#### Northeast 2 Representatives Chuck Williams, Angie Potosky, and Regis Gilchrist

Ashland, Ashtabula, Carroll, Columbiana, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Harrison, Holmes, Huron, Jefferson, Lake, Lorain, Mahoning, Medina, Portage, Richland, Stark, Summit, Trumbull, Tuscarawas, Wayne

#### Southwest 3 Representative Paul Wearing

Adams, Brown, Butler, Clark, Clermont, Clinton, Champaign, Darke, Greene, Hamilton, Highland, Logan, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, Shelby, Union, Warren

#### Central 4 Representatives Tim McNutt

Coshocton, Delaware, Licking, Fayette, Fairfield, Franklin, Knox, Marion, Madison, Morrow, Muskingum, Perry, Pickaway, Union

#### Southeast 5 Representative Chris Cooley

Athens, Belmont, Gallia, Guernsey, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Vinton, Washington

**Director: Dawn K. Watts Editor: Juanita Hall Co-Editors: Megan Anderson Christian**

*The Deaf Reader* newsletter editors reserve the right to review and make any necessary edits in the enclosed articles.