



NATIONAL FEDERATION  
**OF THE BLIND**  
TEXAS

*Live the life you want.*

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF TEXAS**  
**73rd Annual Convention**  
**“Moving Forward: The Impact of Independent Travel On**  
**School, Work And Daily Living”**  
**November 8-10, 2024**

**Crowne Plaza Dallas Downtown**  
**1015 Elm Street**  
**Dallas, TX**  
**(214) 742-5678**

CONTACT US

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

## **HOTEL**

This year's convention is headquartered at the Crowne Plaza Dallas Downtown, 1015 Elm Street, in Dallas. If you haven't already made your reservation, you should do so before October 31. Room rates are: singles and doubles \$129.00 per night, triples \$139.00, and quads \$149.00, plus applicable tax. You can reserve a room by calling 214-742-5678, choosing the number 2 from the menu, and telling whoever answers that you are reserving a room for our group. Our group code is NFQ. Or you can use the following booking link. This is the preferred method for reserving a room.

### [Crowne Plaza Booking Link](#)

When using the link, please note that it is easier to access with a computer.

If you need assistance making your reservation via the link, please call our office for help. When you call, be sure to have your method of payment ready. For security reasons, we do not maintain a record of any credit cards, so even if you have contacted us to help pay for something in the past, we will not have your credit or debit card information on file.

## **INTERPRETATION**

Spanish-language Interpreter services will be provided for the board meeting, resolutions committee meeting, all general sessions, and the banquet. The Travelin' With Newsline session, on Friday afternoon will include a Spanish-language component presented by Ana Marquez. A Spanish-language technology seminar will be offered during the afternoon breakout sessions

on Saturday. You will find that seminar listed in the Saturday afternoon agenda. To access the interpreted meetings, use the link below.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88301349654?pwd=mbt38ilckSIku3PXOQpRGJZ4XIOJYm.1>

Meeting ID: 883 0134 9654  
Passcode: 1600

One tap mobile  
+13462487799,,88301349654#

Please note that we will not provide phones, headphones, phone charging stations, or any other equipment needed to access interpreter services. You should bring your own devices.

## **REGISTRATION**

All convention attendees are encouraged to register. Registration with the convention entitles you to the convention room rate and qualifies you to win door prizes. If you have pre-registered for the convention, please go to the pre-registration table, in the Harris Room to pick up your registration packet. Pre-registration ends at the close of business on October 31. If you didn't pre-register, you may register and purchase banquet tickets when you arrive at the convention. The onsite registration fee is \$40.00, and banquet tickets purchased onsite will cost \$50.00 each. Onsite registration is also located in the Harris Room and will be open at the following times:

Friday, November 8, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.  
Saturday, November 9, from 7:30-8:45 AM and from  
12:00-1:00 PM.

We will adhere to these timelines strictly so our registration workers can participate in all convention activities.

## **EXHIBITS**

Exhibits will be in the Dealey/Cabell Room and will be open at the following times:

Friday, November 8, 10 AM to 5 PM.  
Saturday, November 9, 12 PM to 4 PM.

## **DOOR PRIZES**

We will draw for a variety of door prizes during each general session and at the banquet. You must be registered with the convention to have your name placed in the drawing, and you must be present when your name is called to win.

Mili Martinez, a board member of our Texas Association of Blind Students, will serve as our door prize chairperson this year. If you have door prizes to contribute, please see to it that you get them to Emily Gibbs before the session opens on Saturday, November 9. If you or your chapter plan to contribute cash or gift cards, you may send those in advance of the convention if you wish. That can be done via mail or by using Zelle or PayPal. Our Zelle username is [ncrosby@nfbtx.org](mailto:ncrosby@nfbtx.org). PayPal payments may be sent by using the donate button on [nfbtx.org](http://nfbtx.org). Please label any prizes you bring to the convention in print and Braille.

## **NFB-NEWSLINE®**

NFB-NEWSLINE® will have a table in the exhibit hall, and there will also be a special interactive presentation on Friday afternoon between 2:00 and 4:00 PM. Liz and her team will show you how to use our innovative audio newspaper and information service to learn about travel options in a program called Travelin' With NFB-NEWSLINE®. Our Spanish-language team will be available to demonstrate the service to our Spanish-speaking attendees. Everyone is invited to join us.

## **THE REUNION**

On Friday, from 5:15-6:30 PM, join us for our annual reunion celebration. Food will be served, and the event is open to those who have registered for the convention. There is no additional charge for this event, but you must present a meal ticket at the door. We look forward to seeing everyone there.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

The annual meeting of our board will take place on Friday, November 8, from 4:00-5:00 PM. This meeting is open to everyone. Spanish interpretation will be available.

## **BANQUET**

The annual banquet of the National Federation of the Blind of Texas will take place on Saturday, November 9, beginning at 7:00 PM. Barbara Manuel, our national secretary and president of the NFB of Alabama, will be our keynote speaker. Raul Gallegos will emcee the program, and scholarships will be awarded. Tickets will be checked at the door. Tickets are available online for \$45.00 each, until October 31. If you miss

the deadline to pre-register and purchase banquet tickets, a limited number of tickets will be available for purchase onsite for \$50.00 each. We must plan with the hotel for this meal function; please help us by purchasing your tickets early. Before

### **CASH BAR**

Before the banquet begins a cash bar will be open for those who would like to buy a drink while spending some social time with friends. The bar will be located in Bryan Ballroom A and will open at 6:00 PM.

### **MASSAGES AVAILABLE**

Ta'lia Woodard is a certified massage therapist who is also a Federation member. This year, Ta'lia is offering chair massages to those attending our convention for the incredible price of \$20 for fifteen minutes or \$25 for twenty minutes. Ta'lia is donating fifty percent of all proceeds to our affiliate to support our programs. Her massage station will be set up in the rear of the room during all general sessions on Saturday and Sunday. If you plan to get a massage, you may just walk up and request one, but she is always busy. So, you might want to schedule your session in advance to guarantee a spot. You can do that by sending an email to [vibe.massageco1@gmail.com](mailto:vibe.massageco1@gmail.com). The message should include your name, phone number, email address, and the amount of time you wish to reserve.

### **CONVENTION T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE FOR SALE**

This year, through a partnership with our friends at 64 Ounce Braille, we are making convention t-shirts available at the low price of \$18 plus tax for sizes X-Small, Small, Medium, and Large. We also have shirts from size X-Large to 3X for \$20 plus

tax. These shirts will not be available for sale at the convention. You must purchase them online. If you order before October 31, your shirt will be delivered to you at the convention. Orders may be placed after this deadline, but those orders will incur a shipping charge and will be shipped to your address after the convention. To order, go to

### [NFBTX Convention T-Shirt Order Form](#)

The shirts will be light yellow with an arm patch that includes our affiliate logo in both print and Braille. The shirt will have a blue sky and green grass with a train, plane, bus, and guide dog in black, and a cane in white. Above the icons are the words, “HAVE CANE: WILL TRAVEL”, and below the icons, it says, “NFBTX DALLAS 2024.”

### **LET’S SEE WHO HAS READ ALL THE NOTES!**

Would you like to win \$150 for doing something you were already planning to do anyway? Well, here is your chance. When you pick up your registration materials, you will be given a game card. When you attend certain convention sessions, you will have the opportunity to request a sticker showing you attended that session. Anyone who collects stickers from the following sessions will be entered in a drawing for \$150. Here are the sessions you must attend to be eligible:

1. The session hosted by Spectrum from 1-2 PM on 11/08
2. Newline Event from 2-4 PM on 11/08
3. Board of Directors Meeting from 4-5 PM on 11/08
4. Resolutions Committee Meeting from 7-8 PM on 11/08

5. Any scheduled committee meeting or the Texas Association of Blind Students Meeting beginning at 8:00 PM on 11/08
6. Saturday Morning General Session.
7. Saturday Afternoon General Session.
8. One of the breakout sessions on Saturday afternoon.
9. Banquet beginning at 7:00 PM on 11/09
10. At least three exhibitors
11. Or, replace one exhibitor sticker with one for completing the BOLDER application. See the information below.

Presenters will ask for your card and will only fill their designated space with one sticker, so you can't just ask a friend to hook you up by grabbing extra stickers. You'll have to be present in the sessions to get a sticker for that session. In addition to the twelve stickers you'll get if you attend all the required sessions, a mystery person will have a special sticker that could earn you even more money. The first person to find that person will get the extra sticker, and if their name is the one drawn on Sunday morning, they will get an additional \$50.00 in prize money. You are not required to participate in this game, but if you choose to, you should turn in your full card to Mika Baugh just before the session starts on Sunday morning. The drawing will be held just before we adjourn on Sunday, and you must be present to win.

## **BLINDNESS OUTDOOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT EXTENDED REACH (BOLDER)**

In 2023, our affiliate won a Dr. Jacob Bolotin Award for an innovative program that introduced blind children and their



families to our state parks and the outdoors. We called it BOLD, and in 2025 we are expanding the program to include a camping weekend for families that include one or more blind adults (18 or older) and any children they may have.

To make this program as successful as our last effort, we need your help. When you pick up your registration packet, it should include a carabiner. On one side of it is a QR code allowing you to apply as a program participant. On the other side is a QR code that will take you to the application for those interested in becoming a volunteer for the program. If you complete either application during the convention you may request a sticker from Mika Baugh or Emily Gibbs that you can use to fill up your game card. This sticker can be used to replace one of the required exhibitor stickers.

# **AGENDA**

## **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8**

### **10:00 AM-5:00 PM - REGISTRATION**

Pre-registration packets may be picked up, and those who did not register in advance may do so during these hours. As a reminder, onsite registration will cost \$40, and banquet purchased onsite will cost \$50.

Harris Room

### **10:00 AM-5:00 PM - EXHIBITS**

Dealey Room/Cabell Room

### **1:00-2:00 PM – THE SPECTRUM OF ACCESSIBILITY: INTERNET, PHONE, AND TV**

Spectrum will share its latest accessibility features so blind users can enjoy all of the telecommunications tools available to everyone in the Spectrum market area.

Petr Kucheryavyy, Senior Accessibility Manager

Spectrum - Charter.com

Munger Room

### **2:00-4:00 PM - TRAVELIN' WITH NFB-NEWSLINE® TEXAS**

As our members know, NFB-NEWSLINE is a versatile audio newspaper network. Through the use of a telephone, an iPhone app, an Alexa skill, and online access, blind, low vision, and deafblind users can share in a totally accessible information experience. This year, the focus will be on using Newsline to help with travel planning, finding interesting things to do when

you travel domestically or abroad, deciding what to pack by using weather information, and more. Spanish-language information will be presented by Ana Marquez, our Spanish-language content manager.

Hosted by NFB-NEWSLINE® TEXAS

Liz Wisecarver, Program Coordinator

Gaston Room

#### **4:00-5:00 PM – BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

This is an open meeting. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. Spanish interpretation will be available for this meeting.

Bryan Ballroom B

#### **5:15-6:30 PM - THE REUNION**

Everyone who is registered is welcome to attend this dinner/hospitality event. Bring your ticket. They will be collected at the door. This is a complimentary hospitality event to celebrate our homecoming.

Bryan Ballroom A

#### **6:45-7:15 PM - RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

Resolutions should be submitted to the chair at [gcrosby@nfbtx.org](mailto:gcrosby@nfbtx.org) no later than November 1. Resolutions must be submitted in final form. The committee will not edit resolutions during the meeting.

Glenn Crosby, Chairperson

Bryan Ballroom B

### **8:00-9:00 PM - COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

Each chapter should send at least one representative to this meeting. However, the meeting is open to anyone who has an interest in improving communications to build the Federation in Texas.

Liz Wisecarver, Chairperson  
Munger Room

### **8:00-9:00 PM - MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

Each chapter should send a representative to this meeting, but it is also open to anyone who wants to help recruit new members.

Yolanda Harris, Chairperson  
Gaston Room

### **8:00-10:00 PM - TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF BLIND STUDENTS**

This meeting is for current high school and college students. Individuals who are considering college or vocational training options are also encouraged to attend.

Demetria Ober, President  
Bryan Ballroom B

## **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9**

### **7:30-8:45 AM - REGISTRATION**

Harris Room

### **7:30-8:45 AM - NFB-NEWSLINE® LEADERSHIP BREAKFAST**

This breakfast meeting is for one chapter representative and Newslite ambassadors only. Chapter presidents should notify Liz Wisecarver who is representing their chapter by October 31.  
Bryan Ballroom A

## **MORNING GENERAL SESSION**

Bryan Ballroom B

**9:00 AM – CALL TO ORDER**

**9:05 AM - INVOCATION**

**9:10 AM - CELEBRATION OF INDEPENDENCE**

**9:20 AM – WELCOME TO DALLAS**

Al Rodriguez, President

National Federation of the Blind of Texas, Dallas Chapter

**9:30 AM - MEET THE SCHOLARSHIP CLASS of 2024**

Lara Sowell, Chairperson

National Federation of the Blind of Texas Scholarship  
Committee

**9:44 AM - NEWSLINE MINUTE**

Glenn Crosby, Subscriber

**9:45 AM – TRAVELING FROM THE PRESENT TO THE  
FUTURE: A REPORT FROM OUR NATIONAL  
REPRESENTATIVE**

Barbara Manuel

Secretary, National Federation of the Blind

President, National Federation of the Blind of Alabama

**10:30 AM – Cruises, Hiking, and Football: Navigating Life**

Liz Wisecarver, NFB-NEWSLINE Texas coordinator,  
Moderator

Pam Chesser, Board Member, NFBTX

George Battiste, Board Member, NFBTX

Salvador Villa, Coaching Intern, Westlake High School

**10:59 - NEWSLINE MINUTE**

Glenn Crosby, Subscriber

**11:00 AM – BLIND PEOPLE CAN WORK IN THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY: I DO, AND YOU CAN TOO**

Kyle Kiper, Owner

Dream Vacations - Kiper & Associates

**11:15 AM – THE IMPORTANCE OF INDEPENDENT TRAVEL FOR A BLIND CANE TRAVEL INSTRUCTOR**

Marco Carranza, NOMC, Cane Travel Instructor

Louisiana Center for the Blind

**11:34 AM - NEWSLINE MINUTE**

Glenn Crosby, Subscriber

**11:35 AM – HOW LEARNING TO TRAVEL INDEPENDENTLY HAS OPENED UP MY WORLD TO NEW POSSIBILITIES**

Yezmiene Martinez, Student, and Recent LCB Graduate

**11:55 AM - ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**12:00 PM - ADJOURN**

**SATURDAY AFTERNOON**

**12:00-4:00 PM - EXHIBITS**

Dealey/Cabell Room

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS & COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The following breakout sessions will take place concurrently. They will begin at 1:00 PM and end at 2:15 PM.

**ACCESSIBILITY IS A PARTNERSHIP**

Leslie Schulz, a senior accessibility specialist at Cengage, and Amelia Pellicciotti, a blind university student and vice president of our San Antonio Chapter will lead this topic. The discussion will center around access to higher education materials, but other accessibility issues will be covered as well.

Munger Room

**TRAVELING WITH TECHNOLOGY**

This session will be hosted by Raul Gallegos, first vice president of the National Federation of the Blind of Texas (NFBTX), and Al Rodriguez, president of the NFBTX Dallas Chapter. This is the English version of the session. Al and Raul will also conduct a Spanish-language version of the session beginning at 2:30 PM.

Bryan Ballroom B

**PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION COMMITTEE**

This meeting will serve as a planning session for how to build our affiliate by finding new ways to include a more diverse membership.

Demetria Ober, Chairperson

The Studio - First Floor

The following breakout session will run from 1:30-3:00 PM. Please note that this session is slightly longer than other breakouts and runs on a slightly different timeframe.

### **AN INTRODUCTION TO TENNIS FOR BLIND PEOPLE**

Murray Elbourn will help people interested in athletic pursuits learn more about playing tennis as a blind person. Sports of all kinds can help with independent travel by honing listening and orientation skills, but most of all, they are fun and get you off the couch! Join Murray for this exciting demonstration.

Bryan Ballroom C

These breakout sessions will run concurrently. They will each begin at 2:30 PM and end at 3:45 PM.

### **TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION TOWN HALL**

We usually ask TWC to come and give a general overview of what is going on in the program, and occasionally, our president has hosted a Q&A session with agency leadership. This year, our membership will ask the questions. While the purpose of the town hall is not to resolve individual cases on the spot, Tammy Martin and Juanita Barker will listen to both compliments and complaints about specific issues and answer any questions they have the answers for. Come prepared to ask your questions in a



direct but respectful manner, We always treat our guests with respect, even when we disagree.

Norma Crosby will moderate the town hall. Please join us for a lively discussion.

Gaston Room

### **BLIND SENIORS GROUP MEETUP**

Glenn Crosby serves as president of the National Federation of the Blind Seniors Division, and in Texas, he leads our Blind Seniors Group. During this session, Glenn will talk to blind seniors about the 2025 Senior Retreat and plans for our Texas group in the coming year. Liz Wisecarver will also make an appearance to talk about NFB-NEWSLINE® publications that are of interest to blind seniors and give an update on the planned 2025 Silver Bells Senior Training Program.

The Studio - First Floor

### **INDEPENDENCE AND TRANSIT: A STUDY OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED COLLEGE STUDENTS**

Emily Bell is a graduate student at Southern Methodist University, conducting an ethnographic study related to the lived experience of blind and low-vision college-age students using public transit. Demetria Ober will act as an onsite liaison between students who choose to participate in this session and Emily. The conversation will be driven by those who choose to participate.

Munger Room

### **TRAVELING WITH TECHNOLOGY: SPANISH SESSION**

This session is hosted by Raul Gallegos, first vice president of the National Federation of the Blind of Texas (NFBTX), and Al Rodriguez, president of the NFBTX Dallas Chapter. This is the Spanish-language version of the session. Al and Raul will conduct this entire session in Spanish.

Bryan Ballroom B

### **AFTERNOON GENERAL SESSION**

Bryan Ballroom B

#### **4:00 PM - CALL TO ORDER**

#### **4:05 PM - HOW THE SKILLS I LEARNED AT THE LOUISIANA CENTER FOR THE BLIND HELPED ME TO BECOME A BETTER ATHLETE**

Randi Strunk, Triathlete

#### **4:25 PM - BIGGER, BOLDER, BETTER: A LOOK AT OUR NEXT OUTDOOR ADVENTURE**

Emily Gibbs, Director of Youth & Education Services, NFBTX  
Mika Baugh, BOLDER Project Manager, NFBTX

#### **4:40 PM – MY MOM IS BLIND: LET’S TALK ABOUT IT**

Rosy Carranza, Mom  
Camila Carranza, Daughter

#### **5:00 PM - ADJOURN**

### **SATURDAY EVENING**

## **7:00 PM - BANQUET**

Raul Gallegos, Master of Ceremonies

Bryan Ballroom A

## **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5**

### **7:30-8:30 AM - LONE STAR CHAPTER BREAKFAST**

This is the annual, face-to-face, meeting of our at-large chapter. Chapter members are welcome, and convention attendees who live in a rural area and want to know more about the chapter are invited to attend as well. If you plan to attend, please RSVP by October 31. To RSVP, notify our chapter president, Lara Sowell, at [lsowell@nfbtx.org](mailto:lsowell@nfbtx.org).

Thrive, Round Bar,

### **GENERAL SESSION**

Bryan Ballroom B

### **9:00 AM - CALL TO ORDER**

### **9:05 AM - INVOCATION**

### **9:10 AM - NEWSLINE MINUTE**

### **9:11 AM - PRESIDENTIAL REPORT**

### **9:35 AM - ELECTIONS**

### **10:05 AM - SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Louis Maher, Secretary

National Federation of the Blind of Texas

**10:10 AM – TREASURER’S REPORT**

Lara Sowell, Treasurer

National Federation of the Blind of Texas

**10:20 AM - ANNUAL NFB-NEWSLINE PROGRESS REPORT**

Liz Wisecarver, Coordinator, NFB-NEWSLINE(R) Texas

**10:35 AM - NEWSLINE MINUTE**

**10:36 AM - CHAPTER REPORTS**

**11:00 AM - RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Glenn Crosby, Chairperson

**11:20 AM - LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP**

Gabe Cazares

**11:30 AM - CONVENTION GAME DRAWING**

**11:35 AM - FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**11:40 AM - ADJOURN**