



PRESS RELEASE 01/08/21

For Immediate Release to all Lions publications in MD19 and District Governors MD19 Lions Knights of the Blind Committee (KOTB)

On Tuesday, January 5th, we held our first meeting of 2021. At that meeting we confirmed our Constitution and elected another District Representative in District G. DG19-G, Doug Harvey sent me an email on Monday and gave me a contact, who I called immediately, and he was at our Tuesday evening meeting and Chad Lewis was elected District G Representative. We are still in need of Representatives for Districts D and I.

Our meeting was attended by Al Hedstrom and Ray Fujiura and we were very pleased to have them join us as we begin to move into action. We talked about the importance of empowering Lions (and prospective Lions) to fully participate in Lionism, by assisting in improving accessibility for Blind and Low Vision individuals. We have been working with Peter Anderson and Antoinette Polk of LCI on some of the web material and application forms that are partially screen-reader accessible but need more work. By way of example the welcome booklet that is available in Braille is based on a 2014 version of the booklet, with a charge to the group of \$21.95 plus \$10.66 shipping.

In the conversation we formed a Tech Committee to help find our what direction we can go to see what the best avenue is to format web sites, new member applications, membership materials, etc.

We also formed a committee that will develop a file naming standard for committee minutes and other documents, so that everything will be more easily accessible for all of us, sighted or not.

Prior to our meeting I called all the District Governors in MD19 to ask their permission to pass their phone numbers on to our District Representatives so that they will have a liaison for us to have a better form of communication. While Lions Clubs around the world have done so very much to prevent avoidable blindness, we want to educate ourselves on the activities of MD19 Clubs to improve the quality of life for people who are blind and visually impaired, especially through improving accessibility.

Our meetings are via ZOOM on the first Tuesday of each month, with our next one at 6:30 pm, February 2, 2021, which is Ground Hogs Day. We would like to invite anyone who is interested in our committee to join us, especially any of your members who are blind or visually impaired. If you would like to join us, please reach out to me and I will forward the meeting information to you.

Respectfully submitted by Andy Arvidson, Chair, MD19 Lions Knights of the Blind Committee
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