

Blind LGBT Pride

The "Inside Out" Newsletter

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The Newsletter of Blind LGBT Pride International is published in March, June, September, and December. Material for consideration for inclusion in the newsletter that is of interest to the membership is welcome. All material for inclusion must be received by the first of the month of publication. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions and to include or exclude materials submitted. Items for consideration should be sent to: Connie Torrisi, Editor, InsideOutEditor@Blind-LGBT-Pride.org

Blind Pride is a Special Interest affiliate of the American Council of the Blind and is dedicated to facilitating the free exchange of ideas, opinions and information relative to matters of concern to blind people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Visit us at www.blind-lgbt-pride.org

EDITOR'S NOTE: You can skip to the next article or section of the newsletter by using your word processor's Find or Search function to find the ## sign.

AUDIO VERSION: The Inside Out Newsletter is now available by phone! BPI's quarterly publication is now available in an audio version by phone. To listen to the latest edition call 773 -572-7846 and follow the prompts. (Check with your provider to determine if toll charges apply.)

In This Edition:

From the President's Desk

Editorial: Passing the Torch

2013 BPI Convention Program Schedule

Staying Connected at Convention

BPI Annual Business Meeting Agenda

Proposed Constitution and Bylaw Changes

Election Slate

Triva Spot

More Americans Support Same-Sex Marriage

Blind Extrodinaire

Consider This

In Review

From The Presidents Desk

By Guillermo Robles

Greetings and Happy Summer from Los Angeles! What a difference a year makes. It is hard to believe that the summer season is upon us. With the summer season comes the excitement and the anticipation of the American Council of the Blind's 52nd annual conference and convention. Also, Blind LGBT Pride International will be holding its 13th annual conference and convention concurrently with ACB. The venue this year is the Hyatt Regency in Columbus Ohio. BPI is proud to partner with four special interest affiliates of the American Council of the Blind. Also, BPI will cover topics from Employment to Exploring Your Passion. Please refer to the schedule in this newsletter, as well as the BPI website, www.blind-lgbt-pride.org for up to date program activity

As I write this, I have to reflect on this past year and take a look at where this organization has gone. To do this, I have to revisit the summer issue of 2011 and read my predecessor's article. Let us take a look at some of the positive developments that have taken place this year. In rereading Don Brown's article, one of the issues that he points out as a weakness was that BPI was a little behind in

embracing social media opportunities. I am delighted to say that this has yielded a positive turnaround. Facebook and Twitter have become an integral part of BPI's infrastructure. Numbers continue to grow slowly but surely. Again, it is up to each individual member to continue to make our presence known. Special thanks to the Communications Committee for taking this important task on

The second issue was actually made into several issues in last year's article, but I'm going to focus on a couple and talk about changes that have been made. Keeping the membership of any organization engaged is no easy task, no matter the size of the organization. We have tried to think out of the box and address the disconnect that some members have expressed. The Outreach committee has held telephonic mixers in which members were able to speak freely with one another about issues that they faced. Also, they have expressed ideas that they would like the current and future board members to consider and implement. Thanks to the Outreach Committee for your efforts. We will take your suggestions and take it a step further. Stay tuned to the September newsletter for all that is to come

With respect to internal and external communication, this is something that I, as President strive to improve. There will most often be some instances of miscommunication; however, if we can do what we can to minimize this, it would be to the benefit of BPI. As such, we have created a centralized listserv for BPI's Board of

Directors and Committee Chairs to communicate without messages being lost in the ether. Also, we have migrated our listserv from ACB's domain to BPI's own domain eliminating any excessive spam and technical glitches. I doing this, it has prompted some inactive members to be more active.

And finally, as mentioned in the previous issue of Inside out, BPI continues to grow with the addition of the Texas affiliate. They are definitely a force to be reckoned with. Stay tuned for news from Blind Pride of Texas.

Going forward, there is still work that needs to be done. Blind Pride cannot further its mission with just its elected officials alone. Blind Pride's board is an executive body that represents its membership. As such, we are in need of both your input and your involvement. There is so much talent and skills that abound in this organization that could and should be put to good use. I encourage all of you, no matter what your situation may be to get more involved. I am asking you to think outside of the box and leave your comfort zone and put your talents to good use. If you would like to help in any way, whether it be in fundraising, outreach, communications, or in any other committee, please let me know. I can be reached at president@blind-lgbt-pride.org. We still have a long way to go, but we cannot do this without you.

I cannot wrap up this column without recognizing two of the hardest working people on our Board. They hold At Large positions on our Board. Their years of hard work in

this organization are to be commended. Together, they have kept BPI as cohesive as possible in their own way. First, I'd like to recognize George Ashiotis. He has been serving as our Membership Committee Chair for 4 years. Personally speaking, I have had the privilege of knowing George for over 15 years. His work has always been extremely thorough and efficient. It has been an awesome experience to work with him this year as we've taken on the task of revitalizing our membership roster. George, you have left some pretty big shoes to be filled for sure

Secondly, our editor of this fine publication, Connie Torrisi has informed me that she will not be seeking reelection. She has worked tirelessly for the past 3 years to produce this newsletter and keep our members abreast of what is going on in the blind LGBT community. She will certainly be missed. Both George and Connie have assured me that they will be happy to lend a hand wherever possible. I think I speak for the rest of the board and our members when I say well done for the work you both have put forth.

In closing, I would like to thank those of you who have lent your support to me this past year. What a way to become an active member and shake things up a bit!!! Thanks to those who have let me vent, offered words of reassurance when needed, and offered those much needed suggestions. I will even go as far as saying thanks to those of you who have offered me some interesting challenges. My hair has managed to stay its natural color. Can't say what will happen next year around this time. I guess we'll just have to wait and see. I am looking forward to meeting

most of you in Columbus. Let's get ready for another awesome year to come. Be well and have a safe summer.

With Much Pride,

Guillermo Robles, President,
Blind LGBT Pride International

Editorial: Passing the Torch

Over three years ago, I took on the task of editing the Inside Out newsletter with a sense of ambivalence mixed with excitement. When I first started the job as editor, it seemed like a daunting task. Yet, as time rolled by, I became quite efficient with the process. I did my best to improve the newsletter, not only making it interesting for you, the readers, but making it consistent in presentation and readability.

Once 2013 was upon us, I began to consider running for reelection as member-at-large, and thereby continuing in the position as newsletter editor. I found myself vacillating back and forth trying to decide.

Finally, I decided not to seek reelection. I will relinquish my Member-at-Large position and pass the job of newsletter editor to someone else.

My reasons for this decision center on my need to give more time to my own writing endeavors. I need more time to work on writing short stories in order to achieve my goal of being published in one or more of the premier short story magazines. And, to be honest, I need relief from the responsibilities of putting the newsletter together.

Perhaps I will find other ways to serve BPI in the future.

I wish to thank my fellow board members for the support they have given me throughout my three and a half year tenure as editor. I also thank you, the members for allowing me to serve in this capacity.

A special thanks to Don Brown who was my first contact with BPI and who, after walking me through my first few editions of the newsletter, faded quietly into the background, allowing me to forge my own editorial path.

And a special thanks to George Ashiotis: just because.

I wish you all the best.

With Pride,

Connie Torrisi, Editor

2013 BPI Convention Program Schedule

"Exploring the True Vision of Equality"

By Mark Hanohano, BPI Convention Chair

Attention Conventioneers! We are less than a month left until ACB's 2013 National Convention in Columbus and with the launch of the ACB registration form online, the convention program is now listed for everyone to view. Blind Pride International (BPI) convention programming is ready to hit the ground running with some really exciting events and activities for everyone to take advantage of during the convention week. The Convention Committee is officially announcing its launch of the finalization of its Convention Program and you can find the Program listed below or on the BPI website.

For those of you who have attended convention in the past and are wondering what will make this year different or unique, expect more programming options and more outings for everyone to enjoy during the duration of the convention with a few surprises. For those of you whom have never attended convention before but plan to attend this year be prepared to immerse yourself in a wealth of informative seminars, leisure get-togethers, and making lots of new friends.

This year Blind LGBT Pride International Convention theme is "Exploring the True Vision of Equality". The reason why the convention committee picked this theme is because it reflects what our programming this year is all about and we will all be discovering the true vision of equality together.

Detailed Information on BPI Seminars:

BPI & ACBS Joint Seminar: "Students in Transition" – BPI and ACBS come together to provide resources and information for students in high school transitioning to college or from college into a career. Sometimes resources are right out in the open and this

seminar will provide a wealth of information and advice about what resources are available to students.

BPI & Co-Sponsored by ACBGE Seminar: "Employment Diversity" – Join BPI as we have special guest speaker Kathy Martinez (Assistant Secretary to U.S. Department of Labor for Disability Employment Policy) will speak on Employment Diversity. The three major topics addressed will be on the Labor and Employment Update, Institute on HIV/AIDS and Employment (GLBT Related), and the Disability Employment Initiative.

BPI Seminar: "The State of the State of Equality for All" – Join BPI as we have a special guest speaker Kim Welter (Executive Director of Equality Ohio) will speak on Equality for the state of Ohio and an update on how Equality Ohio is making an impact within their state itself.

BPI & IVIE Joint Seminar/Luncheon – Part 1- "Taking The Ice Out Of Cold Calling." & Part 2- "Gaining a Strategic Edge with Social Media" – IVIE and BPI will join together for an informative seminar on Social Media. BPI's own Will Burley will be the special guest speaker for Part 2 of the Seminar/Luncheon which is titled "Gaining a Strategic Edge with Social Media".

BPI & DIA Joint Seminar: "Diabetes in Progress" – DIA and BPI have come together to provide an informative seminar on Health and Wellness. Brenda Rendelma will be the guest speaker who is from the Central Ohio Diabetes Association. Brenda will speak on prevention of diabetes and ways of maintaining a healthy life style with diabetes.

Guide Dogs of America (GDA) Presentation – BPI has invited GDA to come and speak about guide dogs. A guide dog trainer (to be announced) will be doing a small presentation in the BPI Suite for those who might be interested in getting a guide dog or who are wanting to return for another guide dog.

BPI Seminar - "What's Appening" Workshop – Join BPI's own Kevin Ratliff as he helps you explore the world of apps on your smartphone.

BPI Seminar - "Exploring Your Passions" Workshop – Join guest speaker Will Burley as he speaks on using all the senses and discovering true intimacy.

Here are a few things you should know about Convention:

BPI's Meet & Greet Breakfast Club from Thursday, July 4th through Thursday, July 12th will be a European Continental Breakfast served in the BPI Suite during those dates. The continental breakfast will be \$5 at the door every day it's provided but remember if you buy or have bought the BPI Package the price of the continental breakfast is included the entire duration of the convention.

BPI's Nightly Activity Leisure Outings are outings to the local night life in the area and popular GLBT hang out locations. BPI's Hang Outs are located in the BPI Suite for those not attending any of the BPI Nightly Activity Leisure Outings. All BPI Nightly Activity Leisure Outings and BPI Hang Outs are subject to change or cancellation depending on attendance, volunteers, and any unforeseen circumstances.

The BPI Suite will be open daily and the schedule times will be posted daily on the door of the suite and on social media. Access to the suite will be restricted to convention registered BPI Members and guests with the exception of a few volunteers. Volunteers will be assigned to assist in BPI programming throughout the duration of the convention.

Majority of BPI's seminars, events, activities, and meetings will be recorded and posted for everyone online either right after they are finished or after the convention is complete. For the latest information and updates on convention seminars, events, activities, and meetings please follow or monitor BPI's social media outlets like facebook, twitter, or its own website.

If you or someone you know would like to make a general donation toward convention or would like to volunteer or have any questions please feel free to contact BPI at convention@blind-lgbt-pride.org or you may visit BPI online at www.blind-lgbt-pride.org to find out more information about convention. BPI is looking forward to seeing many of you in Columbus and can't wait to explore the true vision of equality together.

You can contact BPI's Convention Coordinator at 323-533-4395 if you have any questions concerning convention or the program.

Below is the BPI's Convention Program Schedule:

Thursday, July 4th:

9:00 AM BPI VIP Suite: Meet & Greet Breakfast Club

1:00 PM Leisure Lunch Get-together (Meet @ BPI VIP Suite) –
Join BPI 5:00 PM BPI 4th of July Leisure Outing (Meet @ BPI
VIP Suite)

10:00 PM BPI Nightly Activity (Meet @ BPI VIP Suite) Leisure Outing

10:00 PM BPI Hang Out @ the BPI VIP Suite

Friday, July 5th:

9:00 AM BPI VIP Suite: Meet & Greet Breakfast Club

4:00 PM BPI Welcome Party / Mixer

10:00 PM BPI Nightly Activity (@ BPI VIP Suite) Leisure Outing

10:00 PM BPI Hang Out @ the BPI VIP Suite

Saturday, July 6th:

9:00 AM BPI VIP Suite: Meet & Greet Breakfast Club

1:15 PM BPI Caucus (Meeting of Candidates) in BPI VIP Suite

2:45 PM BPI & ACBS Joint Seminar: "Students in Transition"

10:00 PM BPI Nightly Activity (Meet @ BPI VIP Suite) Leisure Outing

10:00 PM BPI Hang Out @ the BPI VIP Suite

Sunday, July 7th:

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM BPI VIP Suite: Meet & Greet Breakfast Club

11:00 AM - BPI Leisure Brunch (local GLBTQ friendly restaurant)

2:45 PM BPI Hosts Audio Described Film - "Les Miserables"

10:00 PM BPI Nightly Activity (Meet @ BPI VIP Suite) Leisure Outing

10:00 PM BPI Hang Out @ the BPI VIP Suite

Monday, July 8th:

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM - BPI VIP Suite: Meet & Greet Breakfast Club

1:15 PM BPI & Co-Sponsored by ACBGE Seminar: "Employment Diversity"

2:45 PM BPI Seminar: "The State of the State of Equality for All"

7:15 PM BPI Business Meeting

9:30 PM BPI Discussion Group Meeting

11:00 PM BPI Hang Out @ the BPI VIP Suite

Tuesday, July 9th:

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM - BPI VIP Suite: Meet & Greet Breakfast Club

12:15 PM BPI & IVIE Joint Seminar: Luncheon (Part 1 & 2)

Part 1- "Taking The Ice Out Of Cold Calling."

Part 2- "Gaining a Strategic Edge with Social Media" -

1:30 PM BPI & DIA Joint Seminar: "Diabetes in Progress"

5:00 PM Guide Dogs of America Presentation (Meet @ BPI VIP Suite)

7:00 PM Drinks with BPI Board of Directors / Meet in BPI VIP Suite

9:30 PM BPI Discussion Group Meeting

11:00 PM BPI Hang Out @ the BPI VIP Suite

Wednesday, July 10th

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM - BPI VIP Suite: Meet & Greet Breakfast Club

1:15 PM BPI Seminar - "What's Appening" Workshop

2:45 PM BPI Seminar - "Exploring Your Passions" Workshop

6:00 PM - 8:30 PM BPI Farewell Party (Dinner & Recognition)

10:00 PM BPI Nightly Activity (Meet @ BPI VIP Suite) Leisure Outing

10:00 PM BPI Hang Out @ the BPI VIP Suite

Thursday, July 11th:

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM BPI VIP Suite: Meet & Greet Breakfast Club

12:30 PM - 3:30 PM BPI Leisure lunch & Shopping (Meet in BPI Suite) 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM BPI Transitional Board Meeting (Closed Board Meeting)

10:00 PM BPI Nightly Activity (Meet @ BPI VIP Suite) Leisure Outing

10:00 PM BPI Hang Out @ the BPI VIP Suite

Friday, July 12th:

9:00 AM -11:00 AM BPI VIP Suite: Meet & Greet

Staying Connected at Convention

By Will Burley

It seems like only yesterday that everyone was preparing for BPI's host of events at last year's convention. How time flies!

Last year was also the first time we chose a hash tag for the festivities and we are doing it again this year! If you don't have a Twitter profile, signup for one by visiting www.twitter.com. You can follow BPI's handle at @blindprideintl or by simply visiting www.twitter.com/blindprideintl.

During the week of convention we will be using the hash tag of:

#BPI13. You can set a filter and see what everyone is up to! Someone will be tweeting during our seminars, workshops and outings. It will feel like you were there!

BPI Annual Business Meeting Agenda

BLIND LGBT PRIDE INTERNATIONAL

Annual Business Meeting Agenda

Monday, July 8, 2013

Columbus, Ohio

ITEM: Call to order

ITEM: Roll call

ITEM: Approval of June meeting minutes

ITEM: Public comment

ITEM: President's remarks

The year in review

The state of the organization

A Look Ahead

ITEM: Treasurer's report

Monthly expenses

Monthly revenues

Account balances

ITEM: Membership committee report

Annual report

ITEM: Communication committee report

Annual report

ITEM: I.T. Committee report

Annual report

ITEM: Constitution and bylaw committee report

Annual report (Proposed amendment)

Proposed constitutional amendments

ITEM: Conference/Convention committee report

Annual report

ITEM: Charter of affiliation of Blind LGBT Pride of Texas

ITEM: Elections

Office of Vice President

Office of Secretary

Member-At-Large 1

Member-At-Large 2

ITEM: Announcements

ITEM: Adjournment

Proposed Constitution and ByLaw Changes

Listed below are the proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws that will be considered at the 2013 annual convention.

ARTICLE I ~ Existing language

NAME:

The name of this organization shall be Blind LGBT Pride International (BPI) known as Blind Pride.

ARTICLE I ~ Proposed Language

NAME:

The name of this organization shall be Blind LGBT Pride International (BPI) known as Blind Pride.

The name “Blind LGBT Pride International” shall not be used by any person or organization without the expressed written consent of the President and/or the Board of Directors of BPI.

ARTICLE V ~ Existing Language

MEMBERSHIP, VOTING AND DUES

A. Membership

Any person who affirms the purposes of this organization is eligible to become a member of Blind LGBT Pride providing she or he complies with the provisions herein.

B. Voting

Each voting member and affiliate in good standing may opt to vote either by electronic ballot or by attending an Annual Convention of Blind LGBT Pride and shall be entitled to one vote. A person casting a vote on behalf of his or her affiliate may cast both his or her individual vote and the vote for his or her affiliate.

1) ELECTRONIC VOTING

Each voting member and affiliate who will not be present at the Annual Convention of Blind LGBT Pride and who opts to vote electronically, does so with the understanding that they will not be able to cast a vote for a candidate running from the floor.

C. Dues

Members shall remit dues in accordance with the Bylaws herein contained.

ARTICLE V ~ Proposed Language

MEMBERSHIP, VOTING AND DUES

A. Membership

Any person at least 16 years of age who affirms the purposes of this organization is eligible to become a member of Blind LGBT Pride providing she or he complies with the provisions herein.

b. Classes of Members are as follows:

- Voting member: Anyone over the age of sixteen who supports the mission of BPI.**
- Student Member: Anyone currently enrolled in a secondary or post-secondary educational institution. Student member shall have full voting rights.**
- Life Member: Anyone over the age of sixteen who supports the mission of BPI. Life Members shall have full voting rights.**
- Associate Member: Any ally or friend who supports the mission of BPI. Associate members shall have full voting rights.**
- Supporting Member: Any individual or organization that supports the mission of BPI. Supporting members do not have voting rights.**

Honorary member: An individual or organization for whom BPI offers special recognition. Honorary members do not have voting rights.

1) ELECTRONIC VOTING

Each voting member and affiliate who will not be present at the Annual Convention of Blind LGBT Pride and who opts to vote electronically, does so with the understanding that they will not be able to cast a vote for a candidate running from the floor.

ARTICLE VI ~ Existing Language

OFFICERS:

A. The Board expects of itself and its members ethical and businesslike conduct. This commitment includes proper use of authority and appropriate decorum in group and individual behavior when acting as Directors. Failure to do so will subject a Board Member to disciplinary actions contained in Section H of this Article. Board Members are expected to attend all board meetings. Failure to attend three consecutive board meetings may result in disciplinary action as delineated in Section H of this Article.

B. The officers of this organization shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, the Immediate Past President and three At-Large Board Members.

C. These officers together constitute the organization's Board of Directors.

D. A majority of the members of the Board of Directors shall be legally blind.

E. The term of office of each officer shall be two years and shall begin at the close of the Annual Convention at which he or she is elected. The positions of President, Treasurer and one Board Member At Large are elected in even numbered years and the positions of Vice President, Secretary and two Board Members At Large are elected in odd numbered years. A one time exception will be made in 2010 where the positions of Vice President and Secretary elected at the 2010 convention will serve one year terms. The Vice President and Secretary positions will resume being elected for two year terms again starting in 2011.

F. Only a voting member of the organization may be elected to office.

G. If a vacancy should occur between Annual Conventions in any position on the Board of Directors, except the President, the Board of Directors, in conformity with the requirements for holding office contained herein or in the Bylaws, may by a majority vote elect an individual to serve in the position until the next Annual Convention, at which time, if necessary, the

membership shall elect a successor to serve for the remainder of the term. If a vacancy should occur in the office of the President, the Vice President shall succeed to that office and shall serve for the remainder of the term.

H. Removal from office:

1. An officer may be removed from office for her or his failure to adhere to the provisions of the Constitution or Bylaws.

2. The Board of Directors shall have the power to suspend a Board Member, which will result in permanent removal from office if the Board Member in question does not request a hearing.

3. The Board of Directors may vote for an officer's suspension only after the officer for whom suspension is contemplated has been given twenty-one days' notice at his or her postal address of record in a pre-determined format which is accessible to that individual or at an email address that had been given by that individual as the preferred location to contact her or him.

4. A quorum for a meeting to suspend an officer shall be three Board Members and the vote to suspend must be unanimous.

5. The officer against whom suspension is contemplated may not cast a vote.

6. If the suspended Board Member does request a hearing prior to the next Annual Convention, a two-thirds vote by Blind LGBT Pride members present and voting at that convention shall be required to confirm permanent removal from office.

ARTICLE VI ~ Proposed Language

OFFICERS:

A. The Board expects of itself and its members ethical and businesslike conduct. This commitment includes proper use of authority and appropriate decorum in group and individual behavior when acting as Directors. Failure to do so will subject a Board Member to disciplinary actions contained in Section H of this Article. Board Members are expected to attend all board meetings. Failure to attend three consecutive board meetings may result in disciplinary action as delineated in Section H of this Article.

B. The officers of this organization shall consist of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, Immediate Past President, and three At-Large Board Members.

C. These officers together constitute the organization's Board of Directors.

D. A majority of the members of the Board of Directors shall be legally blind.

E. The term of office of each officer shall be two years and shall begin at the close of the Annual Convention at which he or she is elected. The positions of President, Treasurer and one Board Member At Large are elected in even numbered years and the positions of Vice President, Secretary, two Board Members At Large and parliamentarian are elected in odd numbered years.

F. Only a voting member of the organization may be elected to office.

G. If a vacancy should occur between Annual Conventions in any position on the Board of Directors, except the President, in conformity with the requirements for holding office contained herein or in the Bylaws, the President may, with a majority of board approval, appoint an individual to serve in the position until the next Annual Convention, at which time, if necessary, the membership shall elect a successor to serve for the remainder of the term. If a vacancy should occur in the office of the President, the Vice President shall succeed to that office and shall serve for the remainder of the term.

H. Removal from office:

1. An officer may be removed from office for her or his failure to adhere to the provisions of the Constitution or Bylaws.

2. The Board of Directors, by a two-thirds vote of those present, may vote to initiate disciplinary actions in the form of a suspension hearing.

3. The Board of Directors may vote for an officer's suspension only after the officer for whom suspension is contemplated has been given twenty-one days' notice at his or her postal address of record in a pre-determined format which is accessible to that individual or at an email address that had been given by that individual as the preferred location to contact her or him. The notice shall contain reason(s) for the hearing and its date and time.

4. A quorum for a meeting to suspend an officer shall be five Board Members and the vote to suspend must be a two-thirds vote of those board members present.

5. The officer against whom suspension is contemplated may not cast a vote.

6. If the board votes to provisionally suspend an officer, a two-thirds vote by Blind LGBT Pride members present at the next convention shall be required to confirm permanent removal from office.

7. A President so removed shall not serve as immediate past President.

ARTICLE IX ~ Existing Language

DISSOLUTION:

This organization may be dissolved only at an Annual Convention by a four/fifths vote of the members present and voting.

A. Any assets held by the organization upon its dissolution shall become the property of the American Council of the Blind, or a like-minded organization.

ARTICLE IX ~ Proposed Language

Dissolution

This organization may be dissolved only at an Annual Convention by a four/fifths vote of the members present and voting.

A. Any assets held by the organization upon its dissolution shall become the property of the American Council of the Blind, or a like-minded organization aligned with the purposes of BPI.

BYLAWS:

BYLAW 1

DUES . Existing Language

A. Dues for membership in the organization shall be twelve dollars per year and shall be paid to the Treasurer or to the person or persons designated by the President.

B. Student membership shall be six dollars, per year and shall be paid to the Treasurer or to the person or persons designated by the President.

C. Lifetime memberships shall be three hundred dollars, and shall be paid to the Treasurer or to the person or persons designated by the President. Lifetime membership dues shall be paid in one installment or in a series of installments over a period not to exceed one year.

BYLAW 1

DUES: Proposed Language

A. Dues for membership in the organization shall be twenty dollars per year and shall be paid to the Treasurer or to the person or persons designated by the President.

B. Student membership shall be ten dollars, per year and shall be paid to the Treasurer or to the person or persons designated by the President.

C. Lifetime memberships shall be two hundred dollars, and shall be paid to the Treasurer or to the person or persons designated by the President. Lifetime membership dues shall be paid in one installment or in a series of installments over a period not to exceed one year.

BYLAW 5 EXISTING LANGUAGE

ENDOWMENT FUND

A. Blind LGBT Pride will maintain an “Endowment Fund” for the purpose of generating interest income to be used for services such as web costs and convention program support.

B. All funds from “Life memberships” and other donations specifically donated to be placed in the “Endowment Fund” will be added to the fund and the fund will be invested in “Secure” investments. The interest will be re-invested until the principle reaches ten thousand dollars, at which time the interest can be transferred to the convention or general account.

BYLAW 5 PROPOSED LANGUAGE

ENDOWMENT FUND

A. Blind LGBT Pride will maintain an “Endowment Fund” for the purpose of generating interest income to be used for services such as web costs and convention program support.

B. All funds from “Life memberships”, a portion of fund raising proceeds, and other donations specifically designated to be placed in the “Endowment Fund” will be added and the fund will be invested in “Secure” investments. The interest will be re-invested until the principle reaches ten thousand dollars,

at which time the interest can be transferred to the convention or general account.

Below is the last item. This is new language. As such, it doesn't have an assigned bylaw number.

Bylaw #? COMMITTEES

In addition to the committees listed below, the membership or the Board of Directors may establish such other standing, special, or ad hoc committees as needed to carry out the purposes of BPI.

A. Membership: The membership of each committee shall consist of the number of members necessary to serve BPI effectively. The President shall appoint as Chairpersons members in good standing who possess those qualities and experience needed to carry out the purpose(s) of the committee to which appointed. Committee Chairs serve at the pleasure of the President. The President shall, by appointment, fill vacancies that may occur in the chair of committees. The Chairperson of each committee shall appoint qualified members to serve on his/her committee and to fill vacancies within his/her committee. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Elections committee.

B. Reporting: Each committee shall report to the Board of Directors, to the assembly at annual meetings, and/or through publications of BPI, on a needs basis or as directed by the President or Board of Directors.

C. Meetings: The President, the Chairperson, or a majority of committee members may call meetings of a committee. A majority vote of all members present and voting at a committee meeting where a quorum is present, shall decide matters of business. Such meetings may be by teleconferencing or other electronic means and in person with a majority of its members constituting a quorum.

D. List of Committees and Duties: The goals, objectives and duties of all committees shall be developed by each committee, directed by the Board of Directors, stated in this constitution, or by the membership in convention assembled. Once developed, these goals, duties, requirements, and responsibilities may be published as a set of standing rules for each committee or added to this constitution by way of amendments to the appropriate committee.

E. Committees

Legislative and Advocacy

With board approval, the Legislative and Advocacy committee shall develop and implement blindness and/or LGBT related advocacy strategies, follow and report on legislative issues,

and educate Membership and allies as to trending issues as needed.

Budget/Finance

The Treasurer shall Chair the Budget and Finance committee which shall be responsible for preparing and implementing an annual budget approved by the board of directors.

Constitution, Bylaws and Resolutions

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall be available to any member who wishes to propose amendments. It shall be responsible for sending notices of pending amendments and changes adapted to voting members. It shall initiate changes that it believes will make BPI more democratic and effective.

Fund Raising

The Fund Raising Committee shall seek and select methods of increasing the Council's income. Its decisions shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. It shall be responsible for carrying out fund raising activities which have been given such approval.

Membership

The membership committee exists to maintain BPI's member base. It works to develop recommended strategies to outreach to new members and retain current members. This committee also works in conjunction with other committees to meet the mission and goals of BPI.

Elections

The Elections committee shall be co-chaired by the Parliamentarian and the Constitution and Bylaws Chair and shall carry out BPI's nominating process and elections, in accordance with the provisions set Fourth by BPI's constitution and bylaws.

Programs

The Program Committee shall be responsible for developing programs for BPI's conference and convention and other meetings, as approved by the board of directors. It shall also serve as a hospitality committee as needed.

Election Slate of Candidates for the Board of Directors

The Elections Committee presents the 2013
Blind LGBT Pride International Nominees
for available positions on the Board of Directors

The nominees are those that submitted their names and filled out a Board Nominee Form. Below is the information that was submitted with the exception of any personal data (e.g. mailing address, phone numbers, etc).

There are two Nominees for Vice President:

Name of candidate #1: Will Burley

Previous experience (if any) with Blind LGBT Pride International or other non-profits:
Currently chairs the Communications committee for BPI.
Will has also been the Executive director of Today's Advocacy Group from 2009 to present

Please mark any of the following skills or experience that the candidate possesses:

Finance, accounting; Management, administration; Grant writing; Nonprofit experience; Fundraising and special events; Public relations, communications; Contacts, networking

Other: press release formation, search engine optimization, newsletter editor, social media

Affiliations or organizations the candidate belongs to (e.g., membership, professional, civic).

Virtual Paralegal Training Center; Houston Metropolitan Paralegal Association; Independent Visually Impaired Entrepreneurs (IVI); Guide Dog Users Inc. (GDUI); Blind LGBT Pride of Texas

Name: of candidate #2: Mark Hanohano

Previous experience (if any) with Blind LGBT Pride International or other Non-profits:

President and Programs Director of Community Association of the Blind (CAB) in Bellflower, CA

Programs Consultant for the California Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) in Sacramento, CA; Vice President of the Visually Impaired Persons (VIP) in Houston, TX

Please mark any of the following skills or experience that the candidate possesses:

Management; Administrative Work; Nonprofit experience; Special Events; Public Relations; Networking; Event Planning; Hosting or MCing Events

Affiliations or organizations the candidate belongs to (e.g., membership, professional, civic).

American Council of the Blind (ACB); Blind LGBT Pride International (BPI); Community Association of the Blind (CAB); Visually Impaired Persons (VIP); Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)

Nominee for Secretary:

Name: Kevin Ratliff

Previous experience (if any) with Blind LGBT Pride International or other non-profits:

Have served on the board of BPI for several years as member at large and most recently as secretary. I also currently serve as secretary of the Austin Council of the Blind, Second Vice-President of the American Council of the Blind of Texas and Vice-President of Blind LGBT Pride International of Texas.

Please mark any of the following skills or experience that the candidate possesses.

Administration; Fundraising and special events; Public relations; communications; networking

Affiliations or organizations the candidate belongs to (e.g., membership, professional, civic).

ACB, ACBT, BPI, BIPTX, Austin Council of the Blind

Nominee for Member-at-Large, #1

Name: Caitlin Hernandez

Previous experience (if any) with Blind LGBT Pride International or other non-profits

:Previously acted as the Junior Representative and the Student Advocate editor for ACB's National Alliance Of Blind Students (2008-2008)

Please mark any of the following skills or experience that the candidate possesses:

Teaching experience

Nominee for Member-at-Large #2

Name Richard Marion

Previous experience (if any) with Blind LGBT Pride International or other non-profits

I have held various board positions with organizations in Canada. Most recently, I have been the Vice-President of the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians BC Provincial affiliate. I also currently sit on our local transit authority's accessibility committee as well.

Please mark any of the following skills or experience that the candidate possesses.

Accounting, Management, administration Nonprofit
experience communications Contacts, networking

Other: I have been involved with conference planning for the AEBC annual conference before. I was the chair of the local organizing committee the last time the conference was in Vancouver in 2009

Affiliations or organizations the candidate belongs to (e.g., membership, professional, civic).

The only organization I am currently a member of is the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians. I am a member of the Access Transit Users Advisory committee which is sponsored by the municipal governments that I'm from, Trans LINK or the South Coast Transit Authority.

Trivia Spot

Plato (427 – 347 B.C.) Renowned Greek Philosopher who, along with his male lover, Dion, founded The Academy. The school curriculum included such topics of study as political theory, science, philosophy, art and literature. The Academy operated for 250 years.

More Americans Now Support Same-Sex Marriage

(USA Today, June, 2013)

About 72% of Americans say that legal recognition of same-sex marriage is "inevitable," a new survey finds.

Support for same-sex marriage continues to increase
Survey finds strong link between personal contacts and attitudes about gays
About 87% of Americans personally know someone who is gay or lesbian

About 72% of Americans say legal recognition of same-sex marriage is "inevitable," according to a survey released today.

Of those who support same-sex marriage, about 85% say it is inevitable, says the Pew Research Center's survey. About 59% of opponents also say it is inevitable.

"As more states legalize gay marriage or give equal status, the question in our minds was how the public sees the trajectory on this issue," says Michael Dimock, the report's lead author and director of the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. "Do they see a future in which gay marriage is going to be the rule, not the exception, in American society?"

For the first time in Pew polling, just over half (51%) of Americans favor allowing same-sex couples to marry legally, the report says. The telephone survey was conducted May 1-5 among 1,504 U.S. adults. The margin of error was +/-2.9 percentage points.

The survey found a strong link between personal experiences and attitudes about homosexuality. About 87% of Americans know someone who is gay or lesbian, compared with 61% in 1993. About 68% of those who know a lot of gays or lesbians favor same-sex marriage, compared with 32% of those who don't know anyone.

"As for the gay marriage issue, it's not about whether we will have families. We already do. It's about whether we will enjoy the same protection as our siblings, neighbors and co-workers," says Rick Rosendall, president of the not-for-profit Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, D.C. "The more people recognize that their siblings, neighbors and co-workers include gay men and lesbians, the clearer it is that those family members, neighbors and co-workers should be treated the same as they are."

Same-sex marriage is or will be legal in 12 states and the District of Columbia. Several states also have domestic-partnership provisions for same-sex couples.

"This poll should caution us to redouble our efforts in explaining to Americans what marriage is, why marriage matters, and what the consequences of redefining marriage are," says Ryan Anderson, a scholar at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank. Anderson, who promotes marriage between a man and woman, says it's not quite clear what Pew's poll question means, since it's legally recognized in 12 states. "The more important question is not what will happen -- but what we should do."

Thomas Peters, communications director of the not-for-profit National Organization for Marriage, which opposes same-sex marriage, says Pew's poll numbers are no surprise. "Gay marriage activists have spent a huge amount of money and cultural influence trying to convince Americans of the lie that redefining marriage is inevitable," he says in an e-mail.

This survey is part of Pew's "LGBT in Changing Times" series, which is focused on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues ahead of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on same-sex marriage this month.

Blind Extraordinaire

James Holman (1786 - 1857), known as the "Blind Traveler," was a [British](#) adventurer, author and social observer, best known for his writings on his extensive travels. Not only completely blind but suffering from debilitating pain and limited mobility, he

undertook a series of solo journeys that were unprecedented both in their extent of geography and method of human society.

Holman was born in Exeter, the son of an apothecary. He entered the British Royal Navy in 1798 as first-class volunteer, and was appointed lieutenant in April 1807. In 1810, he was struck by an illness that first afflicted his joints, then finally his vision. At the age of 25, he was rendered totally and permanently blind.

In recognition of the fact that his blindness was duty-related, he was appointed to the Naval Knights of Windsor, with a lifetime grant of care in Windsor Castle. This position demanded he attend church service twice daily as his only duty in return for room and board, but the quietness of such a life harmonized so poorly with his active habits and keen interests, physically making him ill, that he requested multiple leaves of absence on health grounds, first to study medicine and literature at the University of Edinburgh, then to go abroad on a Grand Tour, from 1819 to 1821 when he journeyed through France, Italy, Switzerland, the parts of Germany bordering on the Rhine, Belgium and the Netherlands. On his return he published *The Narrative of a Journey through France, etc.* (London, 1822).

He again set out in 1822 with the incredible plan of making the circuit of the world from west to east, something which at the time was almost unheard of by a lone traveler, blind or not - but he travelled through Russia as far east as the Mongolian frontier of Irkutsk. There he was suspected by the Czar of being a spy and was forced to return home.

Shortly afterwards he again set out to accomplish his travel goals and an account of his remarkable achievement was published in four volumes in 1834-1835, under the title of *A Voyage Round the World*.

Within a week after finishing his autobiography, *Holman's Narratives of His Travels*, Hohman died in London on July 29, 1857. This last work was never published.

While his early works were generally well received, only partially as a novelty, over time competitors and skeptics introduced doubt into the public consciousness about the reliability of Holman's "observations". In a time when blind people were thought to be almost totally helpless, and usually given a bowl to beg with, Holman's ability to sense his surroundings by the reverberations of a tapped cane or horse's hoof-beats was unfathomable.

Consider This:

The word “pansy” is from the French word, “panse” which means “thought.” The pansy flower, which is said to resemble the human face, tends to lean forward as if in deep thought during late summer. The next time someone calls you a “pansy”, just remember they are saying you are “thoughtful.”

In Review ~ Undercover Sins

Undercover Sins written by Hayley B. James

Review by Vixen

This book is terrific. After reading the synopsis and the other reviews, I didn't even bother with the sample, I just purchased the book and I'm REALLY glad I did!

The story here is superb. There are twists and turns all the way to the end, effectively keeping the reader on the edge of their seat. It's not angst - it's suspense and intrigue. This is the first book by this author that I have read and I will be looking for more. The pace was set early on and just kept going without ever dropping off or getting boring. I loved the characters in the book, even when I was still trying to figure out who the "bad guys" really were!! The story is absolutely complete in and of itself; it doesn't leave you hanging with a bunch of loose ends that would require a sequel. This is one you should not miss - HIGHLY recommended.

Available Formats: Kindle, Audio Book, Paperback

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