



# MD 7 Arkansas Lions

March/April 2016

Volume 1 Issue 5

## MD7 Council

**Lion Angela Smith**  
PDG  
Council Chair

**Lion Maxine Crittenden**  
District Governor (7-L)

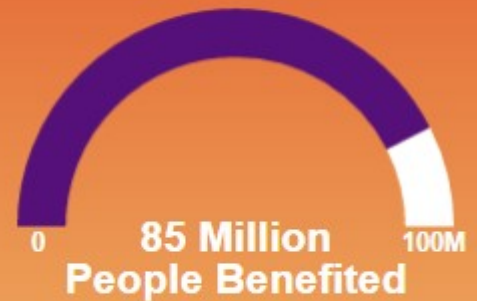
**Lion Diane Archer**  
District Governor (7-I)

**Lion Bill Hankins**  
District Governor (7-O)

**Lion Stan McDougal**  
District Governor (7-N)

**Lion Wanda Barnett,**  
PDG  
Administrative Secretary

## Centennial Service Challenge Tracker



Engaging our  
**YOUTH**  
*Serving 25 Million People*

**Youth**

Sharing the  
**VISION**  
*Serving 25 Million People*

**Vision**

Relieving the  
**HUNGER**  
*Serving 25 Million People*

**Hunger**

Protecting our  
**ENVIRONMENT**  
*Serving 25 Million People*

**Environment**



**REFLECTIONS OF 98th MD 7 CONVENTION**



# LITTLE ROCK FOUNDERS 100TH ANNIVERSARY





# 98TH ANNUAL MD 7 STATE CONVENTION

was held April 29-30, 2016



at University of the Ozarks/Seay Student Center in Clarksville.

I've heard many favorable comments regarding our MD7 State Convention. Special thanks should be given to PID Brian Sheehan, Clarksville Lions Club, the host club, and the Convention Committee for all the work they put forth to make the convention a great success.

I find these meetings to be very uplifting experiences. Lions are great optimists, with an unshakable belief in the future of our organization.

### **CONGRATULATIONS FELLOW LIONS:**

District Governor Elect **Bill Levins** is the recipient of a Leadership Medal.

Past District Governor **Pat Snodgrass** is the recipient of the Prestigious Edward G. Barry, Sr. Award.

Past District Governor **Phylliss Fry** is the recipient of the John H. Barnett Leadership Award.

Lion **Bill Dickens** is the recipient of the Dr. Jim Fowler Humanitarian Award.

Lions **Philip Taylor** and **Brad Baker** were presented the Presidential Certificate of Appreciation.

There were 146 registrants, 136 in attendance.

**There were no resolutions presented.**

Lion Wanda Barnett, PDG

Lions of Arkansas

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### **CONGRATULATIONS**

**CC Angela Smith and Tim Decker**

**May 14, 2016**



# **ARKANSAS INFORMATION READING SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND NFB NEWSLINE--A Well Kept Secret**

## **THE BEGINNING AND EARLY DAYS OF READING SERVICES FOR THE BLIND**

On March 16, 1981, the first broadcast of the Arkansas Radio Reading Services for the Blind hit the airwaves. Looking back, I don't remember the actual date, but certainly do remember the event. It was the first time that many of us who are blind or visually impaired in Arkansas, actually had an opportunity to read the daily newspaper from cover to cover. Before that, we had to rely on friends or family and that usually meant that they read to you, pretty much, what they were interested in.

In 1981, there were just a few reading services operating in the country and no service like this in Arkansas. The first studio was housed in the Guy Smith Vocational Building on the Arkansas School for the Blind campus and remained there until 2001. The broadcast originated on a sub carrier signal from Little Rock radio station KLRE. Patrons were provided with a special analog receiver and the coverage area was primarily central Arkansas. The daily broadcasts consisted of a reading of the Arkansas Gazette, selections from the Arkansas Times and other magazines and the weekly grocery ads. The paper was read first thing in the morning and replayed in the afternoon and evenings to accommodate as many listeners as possible. Over time, a telephone reader was added which made it possible for blind Arkansans to dial in and make selections listening to specific portions of the paper, and other informational announcements, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and statewide.

For twenty-seven years the voice of the Arkansas Radio Reading Service was Mr. Randy Johnson. There was Randy, a part-time assistant and lots of volunteers. However, what you may not know is that there were a lot of people and cooperating agencies and organizations that helped way back then to make Arkansas's Reading Service a reality. Those included members of the Arkansas Council of the Blind and National Federation of the Blind, Jim Hudson of the Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Jim Avance from the Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind, Cleotta Mullens long time director of the Library for the Blind, Max Woolley Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind and Roy Kumpe and Jim Cordell from the Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind. Roy Kumpe, Jim Cordell, Max Woolley, Dick Seifert and Bill Tomlin were all members of Little Rock Lions clubs who played major roles in promoting the Reading Service and along with Mary Ann Tomlin and Searcy Ewell, were responsible for raising match funds to secure the initial and ongoing grant funds and even writing the original grant proposal. These Lions club members were instrumental in beginning a valuable service here in Arkansas that has now been in existence for over thirty-four years and which has grown from volunteers reading daily newspapers and articles of interest over the radio to a multi faceted informational service which blends broadcasts and audio streaming with telephone, internet, IOS and downloadable options.

## **AETN EXPANDED THE REACH OF READING SERVICES FOR THE BLIND**

In 2001, the Arkansas Radio Reading Service for the Blind was approached by AETN, the Arkansas Educational Television Network and invited to use their SAP channel to carry their broadcasts. This significantly expanded the coverage area and made it possible for people in many areas of the state to pick up the broadcasts which by then, had expanded their content to include programming from several other Radio Reading Services throughout the U.S. Things rocked along pretty well then until the conversion of television programming from an analog to a digital signal. The broadcasts are still carried by AETN on one of their broadcast bands and can be picked up using a digital antenna. However, the reticence of satellite and cable providers to add the service has been a significant problem. Shawn Smith, AIRS Program Director since 2008, and the advisory board, have been working on that hurdle and continue to develop new options, services and strategies to move forward with the advances in technology.

## **CURRENT ACCESS METHODS FOR READING SERVICES FOR THE BLIND**

(AIRS Broadcasts) "Arkansas Information Reading Services for the blind provides audio access to current print media for people who cannot read because of a disability. AIRS Radio broadcasts statewide on a digital subcarrier of AETN 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. AIRS can also be heard around the globe on an internet web stream. To listen go to: [www.airs.aetn.org](http://www.airs.aetn.org).

We provide readings of articles from popular publications of wide interest. Our schedule includes programs about career development, health, money, cooking, sports, politics, and pets. From comic strips to obituaries, TV listings to weather, fiction and non-fiction, fully-narrated dramatic presentations, programs for kids, teens, men, women, families and seniors. There's something for everyone.

**AIRS Radio** can be picked up on any Arkansas TV with an antenna by tuning to AETN's DT4. The channels are 2-4 in Little Rock, 6-4 in Mountain View, 9-4 in Arkadelphia, 12-4 in El Dorado, 13-4 in Fayetteville and 19-4 in Jonesboro. These are over-the-air channels. If you have cable TV service, check with your cable company to see on what channel AIRS is carried. We distribute our signal to cable companies for free, but each local cable company chooses if and how to use it." (from the web-site)

**(AIRS Plus)"AIRS Plus** is our new telephone service that allows you to hear many of the programs, readings and publications on demand over your telephone. Put your telephone on speaker or hook up the earbuds to your smart phone, and call toll free **(844) 888-0981** (this number is for callers only in Arkansas."

### THE ADVENT OF NFB NEWSLINE

(NFB Newsline) "Would you like a newspaper with your morning cup of coffee? NFB-NEWSLINE® is well over 300 publications AND it's still growing. Four Spanish-language newspapers are available to all subscribers. The service handles thousands of phone calls each day for individuals across the country who now access daily newspapers and magazines as never before. The toll-free centralized call-in center provides service on demand to any subscriber. This also enables those who cannot read conventional print to have access to all content offered on NFB-NEWSLINE® when traveling throughout the United States twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week." NFB Newsline has been available in Arkansas for just over five years. The service has been developed by the National Federation of the Blind and is sponsored in each state: in Arkansas, that is through the support of the Division of Services for the Blind and its director, Katy Morris. Like the earlier versions of the Telephone Reader, Newsline began as a way to read newspapers over the telephone. It has, however, grown over the years to include over three-hundred publications including: U.S. and international newspapers and magazines, four Spanish language publications, updates from the AP, CNN and the BBC, television listings and comprehensive weather information and alerts.

New publications and services are added all of the time.

Newsline can be accessed via telephone, on-line, as a daily download to a Victor Stream Reader or other similar device, as a daily email or by using an app on an iPhone or iPad. Users can set up favorites and quickly browse through content and even have items or articles emailed to them to refer to later. Applicants can contact AIRS to apply for Newsline service or go on-line to [www.nfbnewsline.org](http://www.nfbnewsline.org) to apply or to find additional information and tutorials.

### LIONS CLUBS ARE CRITICAL IN SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT READING SERVICES FOR THE BLIND

The members of the Friends of the Arkansas Information Reading Service for the Blind, (FAIRS), advisory board and the Program Director, Shawn Smith, wanted you to know more about the wide range of services that the program offers today. The services are provided at no cost to blind and visually impaired Arkansans. However, they are being under-used. We need your help to spread the word about this very valuable service. We need all of you to share this information widely in your local communities, in your local Lions Clubs, cable TV companies, other civic organizations and churches, etc. We need you to help us reach out to the people who can benefit from any or all of these services.

By: Donna Walker

FOR MORE information about all of our services, Arkansans can call (501) 852-5125 or (800) 645-8125.

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## Where there's a need, there's a Lion

