

Running Blind 2016 Annual Report

6-24-17

A Message from Running Blind Founder Hal Wolfe

2016 was a very good year for Running Blind, but a very difficult one for me personally. I again partnered with Gwen Botting of Adventures Unlimited for the Blind (OUB) and jointly organized and sponsored an Adventure Camp with them. The plan that Gwen hatched was to take the kids on a canoe trip. Since I had been an Eagle Scout and a professional guide on wilderness canoe trips for two summers in college, this was a calling I could not pass up. I also helped Hope get a summer job with OUB so she was on their staff most all summer. This turned out to be a challenge for her as the rustic facilities that the camp used in 2015 were not what she was familiar with.

2016 was also difficult for me as I was in the process of completing a two year house addition project that I had started in 2015. And unfortunately I also lost my mother in September, so that added to the difficulties. Losing a loved one is always sad, but my mom had a good life, and lived to a ripe old age of 92 years old, and with a lot of help from my sister Anne, she was never forced to move into an assisted living facility, which was a blessing for her.

Blind runners that Running Blind is currently supporting

Running Blind's primary mission is to help people with visual impairments live a more active and healthy life. We started the year supporting 4 runners, and added one in Texas of all places.

Hope (B1) - lives in Wyandotte and is still running with various guides she has recruited through the Grosse Ile Runners Club.

Geri (B3) – she now lives in W. Bloomfield. Geri found a new guide to support her in 2016 – a friend from her church, David Saperstein. They set a goal of completing a half marathon race walk. She trained alone much of the time, but they trained together at times to get used to the partnership and tether they would use in the event. With pride we can say that Geri met her goal and she and David completed the Detroit Half Marathon in a time of 3:30:23. **Congratulations Geri and David!**

Sile (B1) - lives in Ann Arbor and works for U of M – she is a professor in the Music Department. She ran primarily with Mikel Rubio in 2016. She was busy with work as always and made a trip to San Francisco for work on a project for a brail reader she was participating in. While there I was able to introduce her to my brother Alan (also a runner) and they managed to fit in a meeting at a local pub, and also a run over the world famous Golden Gate Bridge.

Tonya (B1) - lives in Linclon Park and is still doing some running with guides she has found in her area.

Paul (B3) – Paul lives in Plano Texas, but found our website online. I was actually able to find him a guide through the Dexter-Ann Arbor Run database. That event does get some people from Texas, and one of them lived fairly close to Paul and agreed to work with him. (Similar to Geri, Paul only needed help in race events, he is able to see well enough to train on his own.)

Thanks to Our guides!

We owe a debt of gratitude to our guides – they are the eyes and backbone of our organization. Without their support, Running Blind would not be possible. Whether you have helped for years, or filled in as a

sub, having your collective support is important. To all of you – I sincerely thank you for your support! Special thanks in 2016 to Mikel Rubio and David Saperstein.

Running Blind's 2nd Adventure Camp

Our 2nd co-sponsored Adventure Camp with Opportunities Unlimited for the Blind was another big effort and another success. Completing a canoe trip with a group of visually impaired kids and a staff that was not overly experienced with canoeing and was also included a number of visually impaired you adults was a challenge – but we knew it would be and things worked out very well overall. There were certainly some challenges – some expected, and some unexpected, but we made adjustments and got through. The 5 days on the Big Manistee River were a great time and it's a beautiful river. And we again spent a couple of days in the Lake Charlevoix area enjoying some boating and barbecuing there. There is a detailed trip report that I wrote that is posted on-line at the Running Blind website (www.runningblind.org) under "About Us". (Please take a few minutes to look at that if you haven't already – it has lots of great pictures of the group on the river.)

2016 Gallup Gallop – the 2016 Gallup Gallop went very well organizationally, but unfortunately continued the slide in attendance and consequently revenue. We still managed to make just over three thousand dollars, but far less than in 2013 when I helped restart the event, and far less than we would like. Due to construction in Gallup Park, the race must move to an early fall timeframe, and will be held on September 10th, 2017. The move to fall may not be all bad for the overall event, and we are hoping that the more popular fall timeframe will draw more participants. *(Please come and join us!)*

Financial Status

As previously mentioned, the Gallup Gallop raised \$3000. I did conduct an online campaign to help fund the adventure camp. Through the generous support of around two dozen donors, we managed to raise close to \$3000 to almost match what was raised via the Gallop. Of particular note was the generous \$1000 donation from Eugene Barry of Clawson Michigan. That is the largest single donation we have ever received so we are very grateful for that. Other generous donations were received from Larry Gagnon (\$250), Cynthia Leaman (\$200), and Maria Dieter (\$150). Thanks to all of you for whatever amount of support you were able to provide to us. (All donors are listed below and on our website.) I can assure you that we don't waste any of our money, and other than Hope and Geri, no one associated with Running Blind has received any salary. (I will admit, I do take Tom (our webmaster) to lunch now and then. For all of the incredible work he has provided on the website, that's the least I can do for him.)

Looking Forward

Although 2016 was a good year in many respects it was difficult, and it has taken me until mid 2017 to dig out of the hole I was in with projects and family issues. With the support of Geri in Communications, and the new tools we are assimilating on our website and with other support groups like United in Stride, 2017 should be a good (and more stable) year. Thanks for all of your support!

Hal Wolfe

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2016 donor list

Eugene Barry	2016	\$1,000
Lawrence Gagnon	2016	\$250
Cynthia Leaman	2016	\$200
Maria Dieter	2016	\$150
Ward Nichols	2016	\$100
Lorene Bronner	2016	\$100
Jeffrey Basch	2016	\$100
David Saperstein	2016	\$100
Alan Wolfe	2016	\$100
Tom McMahon	2016	\$50
Paul Mayer	2016	\$50
Mike Golombek	2016	\$50
Hal Wolfe	2016	\$50
Geoffrey Lane	2016	\$50
Don & Tahnee Prokapow	2016	\$50
Deborah Ladenheim	2016	\$50
David Carr	2016	\$50
Francoise McMurtrie	2016	\$30
Anne Bannister	2016	\$30
Anita Cook	2016	\$30
Don Lawrence	2016	\$20
Peter Mclsaac	2016	\$5

Vision Problems – don't take your sight for granted!

Refractive Error: more than half of the U.S. population (over 150 million) wear corrective lenses.

Visually Impaired: uncorrectable 20/60 vision. More than 3.4 million Americans (2.85% of the population) over the age of 40 are visually impaired or worse. (20/40 or better is required to drive)

Legal Blindness: uncorrected vision of 20/200 or worse or a field of vision of 20 degrees or less.

Track & Field visual impairment categories:

B1: total blindness – guide runner required

B2: 20/600 or worse – guide runner optional

B3: 20/200 – 20/600 – guide runner not allowed at Paralympic competitions

B4: 20/70 – 20/200 – not recognized by the Paralympics – must compete with fully sighted