

Barbara Loos

I, Barbara Loos, grew up in Weeping Water, Nebraska City, and Lincoln, Nebraska. My formal schooling took place at the Nebraska School for the Visually Handicapped (NSVH), now the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired (NCECBVI); Nebraska City High School (NCHS); and the University of Nebraska, Lincoln (UNL). I graduated from NSVH, having attended some classes at NCHS, in 1968. I graduated with distinction from UNL in 1973 with a BS Degree in Education, majoring in English and minoring in Spanish.

My employment includes Braille transcription and library work At NSVH in the summer of 1969; print transcription from tapes for Selection Research Incorporated (SRI) in 1973; positions at Nebraska Rehabilitation Services for the Visually Impaired (NRSVI), now the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NCBVI) from 1973 to 1981, beginning on contract as an Aide and ultimately Becoming Supervisor of the statewide Orientation and Adjustment Center in Lincoln; data entry work from tapes, Braille, and occasional live readers, some formatted for Braille transcription, from 1993 to 2001; instructing blind adults in the use of computers and adaptive equipment from 2001 to the present; and tutoring a blind youth.

I have served on advisory committees to NSVH and NRSVI and on the Board of Directors for Radio Talking Book (RTB). I was a member of the original Planning Team for Statewide Services for Educating Children Who are Blind or Visually Impaired and served on the follow-up team in 2004. I served on the National Advisory Group on Collection-Building Activities at the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) of the Library of Congress from 1998 to 2000. For over 15 years, I have remained President of the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults. In 2000, Governor Mike Johanns appointed me (then Barbara Walker) to the first Board of Commissioners for the newly

established Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NCBVI) and he reappointed me in December 2003. I have served as its chairman since its inception. I have contributed articles to The Braille Monitor, the National Federation of the Blind's Kernel Books and News From Blind Nebraskans. In November of 2000, I presented a speech on Employment Creation to the Fifth General Assembly of the World Blind Union in Melbourne, Australia. As a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, my responsibilities have included, Secretary of the United Methodist Women unit, President of my adult Sunday school class, Chairperson of Circle III, member of the choir, leader of a book group, Bible school teacher, guitar accompanist, etc. I have also been an informal mentor to a blind child since 1998 and, in 2005, made a two-year commitment to a blind youth as a mentor through the National Center for Mentoring Excellence. I was widowed in 1989 and remarried in 2003. I have two biological children, three stepchildren, and two-step grandsons.

I have received several awards from the NFBN, including the Richard Parker Memorial Award, our state affiliate's highest honor. In November 2001, the League of Human Dignity presented the Ken Lyndhurst Volunteer of the Year Award to me. In August 2003, I received the Outstanding Citizen of the Year Award from the Lincoln East Rotary Club. In 2005, I was presented the Jacobus tenBroek Award, the highest honor bestowed upon a member by the National Federation of the Blind.