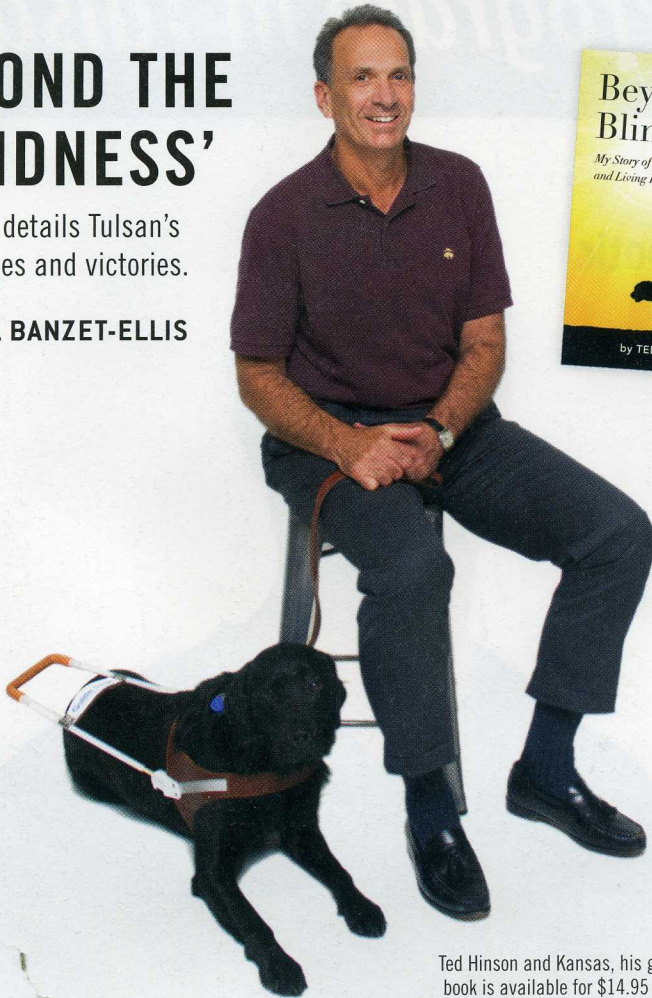


'BEYOND THE BLINDNESS'

Memoir details Tulsan's challenges and victories.

BY GAIL BANZET-ELLIS



Ted Hinson and Kansas, his guide dog. Hinson's book is available for \$14.95 at tedhinson.com.

When **Ted Hinson** became blind from an infection in his optic nerve at age 27, he was determined not to let the setback control his life.

Within a year, he got a job and acquired a seeing-eye dog. Hinson and his wife raised five children while he built a successful career in the energy industry. Now 58, he enjoys running, water skiing, good coffee and interesting audio books.

"If you get your attitude right, you can do a lot of things in life," he says. "I was fortunate enough to have the mentality, heart and faith to stay positive."

In his new memoir, "Beyond the Blindness: My Story of Losing Sight and Living Life," Hinson relays an easygoing and fun-hearted account of the challenges he and his family have overcome. Now

available on Amazon, the book shares his experiences as a blind person, including stories about the five patient guide dogs that have accompanied him over the years.

Hinson's dog Kansas joined the family in February. A graduate of Guide Dogs for the Blind in California, the friendly black lab is a protective companion, helping Hinson navigate streets and board the city bus. "You have to trust the dog, and we work together as a team," he says.

In addition to loyal canine friends, improvements in technology aid Hinson with everyday tasks. He uses VoiceOver on his iPhone and a screen reader on his laptop.

"Things happen when you never expect them to happen, but I'm taking a bite out of life," he says. **TP**

LIBRARY LOVERS MARK 60 YEARS IN TULSA This year marks the 60th anniversary for Friends of the Tulsa City-County Libraries, a nonprofit group that aids and promotes the activities and goals of the TCCL system.

The milestone coincides with National Friends of Libraries Week from Oct. 15-21. Tulsa's celebration includes an Oct. 16 review of **Laurie R. King's** "The Beekeeper's Apprentice" at Books Sandwiched In, and an Oct. 17 book signing with **Brit Bennett**, author of "The Mothers." Central Library, 400 Civic Center, will host both events.

Friends memberships range from \$10 to \$250 (for a lifetime membership). For more information and a full schedule of National Friends of the Libraries Week activities, visit tulsalibrary.org/friends. — **MORGAN PHILLIPS**



Ben Arredondo and Abby Kurin, director of film, music, arts and culture for VisitTulsa, at the 2016 Tulsa American Film Festival

FROM NEW YORK TO TULSA

There's one thing most attending the third annual Tulsa American Film Festival this month don't know: The festival isn't run by a Tulsan. Founder and Executive Director **Ben Arredondo** is a native Texan living in New York City.

He's a producer, director and writer in that metropolis, where he also directs the NYC PictureStart Film Festival. Under his leadership over the past seven years, that festival has grown from a local one-night-only event to an internationally recognized festival in NYC and Johannesburg, South Africa.

Arredondo was visiting a friend in Tulsa and fell in love with Circle Cinema when he got the idea to organize a similar event here. Seeing Tulsa's booming art scene, he says it was a shame the city did not have a traditional film festival. "There is a pretty vibrant, active film community here," he says. The first TAFFest was in 2015.

The 2017 festival will include screenings of 50-60 new independent films at various Tulsa locations. Featured guests will include **Tricia Wood**, the casting director for "La La Land," and film producer and former Tulsan **Doug Claybourne**. Claybourne produced the 1983 film "Rumblefish," adapted from the novel by Tulsan **S.E. Hinton**, which will be screened Oct. 12 at Guthrie Green.

— **EMILY FATE**

Oct. 11-15

TULSA AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL

Various locations. \$10, tickets to individual showings; \$60, all-access pass; \$90, VIP pass; free, students with a valid ID. Visit tulsamericanfilmfest.com.