

IPVI INSIGHTS

Connecting & Supporting Families Whose Children are Visually Impaired, Including Those with Additional Disabilities

**December
2013**



IPVI ANNUAL MEETING



IPVI's outgoing Board (left to right): Judy Metoyer, Rich Zabelski, Bill Bielawski, Dawn Wojtowicz, and Vicki Juskie



IPVI's incoming Board (left to right): Mary Zabelski (VP), Lyle Stauder (President), Dawn Wojtowicz (Secretary), and Vicki Juskie (Treasurer)

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2013 IPVI Annual Meeting

Bill Bielawski, IPVI Past President

The meeting was very pleasant. We socialized while sharing the snacks we brought. The room provided a comfortable setting.

We discussed our past, present, and some possible future operations. The main topics included:

1. Direct Mail Membership: It worked well this first attempt. The dues we collected far exceeded the cost of the direct mailing.
2. Free Matter for the Blind: We reviewed the requirements, and with some small changes to the contents of the newsletter, we should be able use Free Matter.
3. Printing Costs: Even if we can use Free Matter, the printing costs would eventually drain our account. So we need a fundraising idea to cover the cost of printing a monthly newsletter.
4. Lyle Stauder and Mary Zabelski returned to the board, joining Dawn and Vicki. There is still one Vice President spot open, so we need a new volunteer.

Anyone can volunteer to help IPVI in many capacities, but a Board member must be a parent of a child who is visually impaired. IPVI needs an inflow of new, young volunteers if it is to flourish.

IPVI has been Joan's and my primary volunteer activity for the past 28 years. We will continue to serve IPVI. We have enjoyed meeting so many wonderful parents and teachers of children who are visually impaired. IPVI helped us raise our daughter, and has helped countless other families since 1986. We wish you a Merry Christmas! Remember: "Alone you can do so little, but together we can do so much." (Helen Keller)

MS. VIC'S VOLLEYS

Victoria Juskie, IPVI Treasurer

VOLLEY I

Since our last publication, the following families, individuals, and/or organizations became members:

Lois Fite, Maywood
Antoinet Kyle, Chicago

VOLLEY II

Well, the subject of a lot of my columns over the last near decade is going to college next year. Whew! Did I just say that? I guess I did. Matt's been accepted at a couple of colleges so far and plans are under way for applying for scholarships. I have included below some information on scholarships for the visually impaired for others who are in the same position as we are. They are:

American Council of the Blind (ACB)

The American Council of the Blind offers scholarships to outstanding undergraduate and graduate students who are blind. For applications or additional information contact:

American Council of the Blind (ACB), Scholarship Office, 1155 15th Street N.W., Suite 720, Washington, DC 20005, Telephone: 800-424-8666, Web site: <http://www.acb.org>

American Foundation for the Blind

The American Foundation for the Blind administers a scholarship program for deserving students. Each year individuals who are blind or visually impaired can apply for financial awards to support their post-secondary education. For applications or additional information contact:

American Foundation for the Blind Information

Center, 11 Penn Plaza, Suite 300, New York, NY 10001, Telephone: 212-502-7661 Web Site: <http://www.afb.org/scholarships.asp>

Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER)

The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired offers the Ferrell Scholarship to students who are legally blind and are preparing for a career in the education or rehabilitation of blind or visually impaired children or adults. For an application or additional information contact:

AER Ferrell Scholarship Fund, 4600 Duke Street, Suite 430, Alexandria, VA 2239, Telephone: 703-823-9690 Web site: <http://www.aerbvi.org>

The Blinded Veterans Association (BVA)

The Blinded Veterans Association offers scholarships to dependent children and spouses of veterans of the United States Armed Forces who are blind (either service or nonservice connected.) Veterans need not be members of the Blinded Veterans Association. For applications or additional information contact:

The Kathern F. Gruber Scholarship Program, Blinded Veterans Association, 477 H Street N.W., Washington, DC 20001-2694, Telephone: 202-371-8880 Web site: <http://www.bva.org>

The Christian Record Services

The Christian Record Services offers scholarships in all areas of study to undergraduate students who are legally blind. For applications or additional information contact:

Christian Record Services, 4444 South 52nd

(Continued on page 4)

Street, Lincoln, NE 68516, Telephone: 402-488-0981, Web site: <http://www.christianrecord.org>

The Jewish Braille Institute of America, Inc.

The Jewish Braille Institute of America, Inc., offers scholarships to students who are blind or visually impaired and plan to study Judaica. For applications or additional information contact:

The Jewish Braille Institute of America, Inc., 110 East 30th Street, New York, NY 10016, Telephone: 212-889-2525, Web site: <http://www.jbilibrary.org>

Jewish Guild for the Blind

The Jewish Guild for the Blind offers scholarships to college-bound high school seniors who are legally blind. For applications or additional information contact:

The Jewish Guild for the Blind, 15 West 65th Street, New York, NY 10023, Telephone: 212-769-7801, Web site: <http://www.jgb.org>

Lighthouse International

Lighthouse International offers scholarships to students who are legally blind and residents of the eastern region of the United States. Scholarships are available for academic programs leading to undergraduate or graduate degrees or for vocational programs leading to career changes. For applications or additional information contact:

Lighthouse International, Lighthouse International Scholarship and Career Awards, 111 East 59th Street, New York, NY 10022, Telephone: 212-821-9428, Web site: <http://www.lighthouse.org>

National Federation of the Blind (NFB)

The National Federation of the Blind offers a broad range of scholarships. Applications for scholarships will be accepted from July 1 through March 31 of each year. For applications or additional information contact:

NFB Scholarships Committee, 805 Fifth Avenue, Grinnell, IA 50112, Telephone: 515-236-3366, Web site: <http://www.nfb.org>

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation offers scholarships to disabled students. Scholarships are awarded to New Hampshire residents only. For applications or additional information contact:

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, 37 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301-4005, Telephone: 603-225-6641, Web site: <http://www.nhcf.org>

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic offers scholastic achievement scholarships to students who have been enrolled in the recording for the blind program for one year prior to application. For applications or additional information contact:

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (Now called Learning Ally; learningally.com), Scholarship Office, 20 Roszel Road, Princeton, NJ 08540, Telephone: 609-452-0606, Web site: <http://www.rfbd.org>

VSA (Very Special Arts)

VSA offers the Panasonic Young Soloists Award to disabled individuals who are twenty-five years of age and younger and are instrumentalists or vocalists that perform as soloists.

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For an application or additional information contact:

VSA, 1300 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036, Telephone: 800-933-8721, Web site: <http://www.vsarts.org>

United States Department of Education

The United States Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid offers two free cassette recordings with information on post-secondary student financial aid for students with visual impairments. To receive these cassettes contact:

Federal Student Aid Information Center , P.O. Box 84, Washington, DC 20044, Telephone: 800-433-3243, Web site: www.ed.gov

These are just a few of them, and hopefully, some of this information will prove useful. I recommend that when beginning to choose potential colleges, don't wait until senior year to commence the search. Applications may begin as early as September of senior year and the sooner yours is in, the better. Many of the grants need to be applied for by January or February of senior year as well. Note that each campus visit usually takes an entire day with traveling, attending their seminars and the actual tours. I recommend starting to visit the colleges during junior year, if you can. Then you'll have a good idea of which one your child wishes to attend. I know, for example, from the five ranked top choices Matt had, he changed his mind significantly after visiting the campuses. Also, he got a better feeling of what college life would be like after walking each of them, visiting the dorms, determining the transportation options, as well as seeing some of the classrooms, dorms and cafeterias. He determined also which colleges had the best facilities and accommodations for visually impaired students. By starting in junior year, this also allowed him time to see a

few more that weren't part of his original choices.

Once you've narrow down your preferences, request application packages so that you can review them and commence completing the lengthy application processes. You should be aware that visiting the campuses is a necessary part of the negotiations for tuition reductions as well. For example, when determining tuition costs, you can tell the colleges your choices are between "A, B, and C," and by visiting each of them you show you're truly interested. Then the colleges may begin to offer grants to convince you to spend your college money with them. This can help eliminate the disparity in costs between colleges and level the playing field enough so your child can attend the one s/he wants. If you haven't got a visit recorded with the college, you lessen your negotiation position.

Also, help your child pro-act to the necessary essay writing s/he will be required to provide. Matt started his in the summer before senior year. This helped immensely because once school started up again, he realized how busy he was just with school work and was glad he wasn't under so much pressure to complete these essays about himself. Each college wanted an essay with subtle changes to his original draft, and it was much easier to edit than to start from scratch.

So my tip of the day is that if your child is going to college, start preparing for it early enough so that you're not under as much pressure. Enjoy the time together visiting the schools and bonding some more. It will be soon enough that you're sending them off, and they're unpacking their gear into their dorm rooms. Wow, now won't that be a hoot being able to say that you got your child into college, with all the naysayers getting raspberries blown at them? I truly think so, yes.

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VOLLEY III

I hope all of you have a wonderful holiday season. God bless you all!



ASK M@



ASK M@

Hey everyone,

Hope all is going well for you this wonderful, cold month of December! I must be honest that even though it's been snowy and sort of depressing outside,

I am not totally bummed about the weather. This is because we had such a nice fall, and the weather cooperated for my golf season so that is all that matters (to me anyway). :D

Now, I have moved on to bowling for my second year. It is awesome that I made the team and also that the practices including meets are indoors! I really enjoy the team as a whole, between the team bonding and just trying to do my best every time. It is also another individual sport like golf. Even though one is on a team, each one of us is still bowling for his own scores, and no one but the bowler can affect that. Bowling is the same as golf in that the bowler has to put the ball into play, and this is exactly what I would like to talk about for this month.

The beauty about bowling is just about anyone can participate, and believe it or not, we with visual impairments have an advantage over the rest. At the moment one would probably be looking at me like I am crazy about

now; but in all actuality, in bowling one should not be looking at the pins. In fact, s/he should be looking not much farther than right in front of his/her feet. The key to a great bowler is not to throw the ball at the pins. In fact, the main goal is to roll the ball at the dot you are aiming for on the foul line. If you can do this regularly, you will hit your "mark" consistently. The point to this is the importance of visually impaired students getting involved the best they can. Bowling with the school is a great way not only to improve your skills, but also to gain more hand-eye coordination and simply to have lots of fun.

Additionally, if your child has no vision at all or some other physical handicap, s/he can still bowl, with some assistance. There are several devices at the alleys or which you can purchase to help. For example, most alleys have a metal ramp on which the bowler places the ball and then releases it. The ball rolls down the ramp's arch onto the lane. They also have bowling rail guides, bowling ball grip handles, and electronic ball releases, which may be viewed at adaptivesportsequipment.com.

Also, bowling teams have some of the nicest teammates. No matter what, they are always backing you up and picking you up when you're down. So many other sports are so cut-throat that the teammates hope you do poorly, so they can look better.

My main purpose of this is to give students and parents of students with visual impairments a great sport that they can enjoy and even be very successful at because they are not waiting to catch a football or hit a baseball. They get to start the play when they are ready. One doesn't have to time a hard count or guess where the opposing player is going to kick the ball at the net. It is all in your hands, pun intended. (The bowling ball is supported by your hands...ha ha.) Anyway, I hope that this suggestion is something that may be use-

ful.

Lastly, I wish that everyone has a terrific holiday season! Also I hope everything you want is waiting for you on December 25th under that big tree. Just remember, when ripping open that paper, be sure to stop and be thankful for all you have. Even though sometimes life may seem a little unfair, simply remember that it always could be worse. Be extremely grateful for what you have, and also for all that your parents have done for you, no matter if it seems like a big deal or not. Hey, that's what the holiday season is really all about, right? Presents are just a bonus. Once again have a great holiday season and thanks for reading my last column..... of 2013. GOTCHYA!

Talk to you next year!!!

M@



With Hanukkah observed during Thanksgiving this year as well as the popularity of online shopping and retailers offering new store hours and early sales, the holiday buying season is already underway!

Because the CPSC has reported that there were more than 262,000 toy-related injuries in 2011 (the last year data is available), Prevent Blindness America is offering tips on how to purchase gifts, especially for children, that will keep the holidays happy.

More details are below. Please let me know if I may provide additional information.

Best regards,
Sarah Hecker
Director, Media Relations
Prevent Blindness America
211 West Wacker Drive
Suite 1700
Chicago, Illinois 60606
T 312.363.6035
F 312.363.6052
www.preventblindness.org

Keep Holidays Bright by Making Safe Toys and Gifts a Priority When Shopping This Year

-More Than 262,000 Were Treated in U.S. Hospital Emergency Departments in 2011 from Toy-related Injuries-

CHICAGO (Nov. 14, 2013) – As widely reported, an increasing number of major retailers across the country plan to open on Thanksgiving in order to give shoppers a jump on their holiday shopping. Combined with the popularity of online shopping, consumers can complete their lists earlier than ever. And, with Hanukkah beginning early as well, Prevent Blindness America, the nation's oldest non-profit eye health and safety group, is providing tips to gift-givers to make sure all gifts are the safe, especially those intended for children.

In 2011, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimated that hospital emergency rooms across the country treated 262,300 toy-related injuries. And, 74 percent of those injuries were to children under the age of 15. In fact, more than 92,000 were to those under 5 years of age.

Because the most commonly injured part of the

body is the head and face area, Prevent Blindness America has declared December as Safe Toys and Gifts Month in an effort to help adults make the best decisions on how to keep the holiday season joyful for everyone. The group is offering toy-buying and gift-giving tips to anyone planning to purchase a gift for a child this year.

Prevent Blindness America suggests that before purchasing a toy:

- Read all warnings and instructions on the box.
- Ask yourself or the parent if the toy is right for the child's ability and age.
- Avoid purchasing toys with sharp or rigid points, spikes, rods, or dangerous edges.
- Check the lenses and frames of children's sunglasses; many can break and cause injuries.
- Buy toys that will withstand impact and not break into dangerous shards.
- Look for the letters "ASTM." This designation means the product meets the national safety standards set by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM).
- Avoid toys that shoot or include parts that fly off.
- Gifts of sports equipment should always be accompanied by protective gear (such as a basketball along with eye goggles or a face guard with a new batting helmet for baseball or softball).
- Don't give toys with small parts to young children. Young kids tend to put things in their mouths, increasing the risk of choking. If the part of a toy can fit in a toilet paper roll, the toy is not appropriate for children under the age of 3.
- Do not purchase toys with long strings or cords, especially for infants and very young children as this can become wrapped around a child's neck.
- Always dispose of uninflated or broken balloons immediately. According to the CPSC, more children have suffocated from them

than any other type of toy.

"To help keep the holidays festive and bright, we hope all gift-givers will take a moment to make safety the top priority when considering gifts," said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness America. "We at Prevent Blindness America also wish everyone happy holidays and a safe and Happy New Year!"

For more information on safe toys and gifts for children, including the PBA Safe Toys Check List, please preventblindness.org/safe-toy-checklist, or call Prevent Blindness America at (800) 331-2020.

About Prevent Blindness America

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates and regional offices, Prevent Blindness America is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.





IPVI's Matthew Benedict Juskie Scholarship Fund

For students who are blind or visually impaired

Any individual intending to continue his/her education at a college, university or trade school and is interested in being considered for the MBSF, must meet the following criteria: Illinois resident, blind or visually impaired, undergraduate or graduate student, and an IPVI member.

The candidate's application is processed free of charge. The student must mail or fax a written request to receive a copy of the application from IPVI. Then the student must complete the MBSF Application Form, provide 3 completed Reference Forms, submit medical records or a letter from the vision specialist confirming the condition, and mail them to IPVI. The applicant may attach a 1-page resume of clubs, offices held, or any other pertinent information concerning his/her activity record.

The IPVI Board of Directors will review all scholarship applications and select the winners. IPVI reserves the right to announce such awards in its newsletters and marketing materials.

The MBSF is funded completely from tax-deductible donations from individuals, companies and corporations who support IPVI's goals. Any individuals or groups wishing to donate to this fund, please forward your tax-deductible donations to IPVI. Thank you for your continued support of IPVI.



To request a scholarship application, please contact the Scholarship Program Coordinator, Vicki Juskie at: 1-815-355-2098 or vajuskie@aol.com



THE CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE & IPVI

INVITE YOU TO A

**HOLIDAY PARTY FOR TODDLERS
& SMALL CHILDREN**

(Children from birth through 9 years)

At

**THE CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE
1850 W. Roosevelt Road**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14
11:30 A.M. - 2:30 P.M.**


**FEATURING SANTA CLAUS, IPVI ELVES,
HOLIDAY CAROLS, FOOD, ARTS/CRAFTS
HOLIDAY PRESENTS**

Birth to three families, IPVI members welcome

(Thank you IPVI, Lions Clubs, & community partners)

R.S.V.P. Mary Zabelski - 312/997-3675





**La Chicago Lighthouse & IPVI
Invita a usted y su familia
A la fiesta de los niños
(Niños entre recién a los ocho años)**

A

**A la Chicago Lighthouse
1850 W. Roosevelt Road**

**Sábado, Diciembre 14
11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

**Santa Claus, IPVI Elves, Música de Navidad,
Comida, arte, regalos de Navidad**

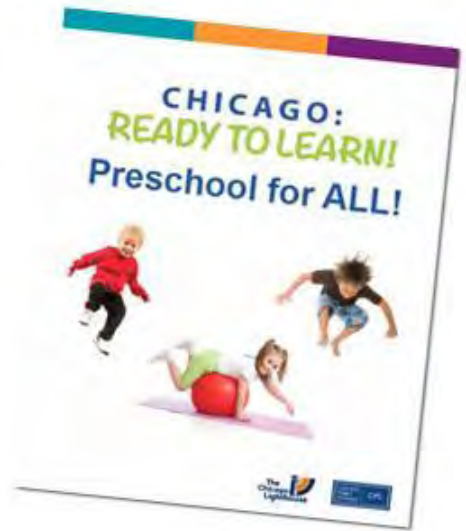
**Las Familias de nacimiento a los tres años,
IPVI miembros son bienvenidos**

**Por favor si va asistir llamar a
Mary Zabelski (312) 997-3675**

**(Gracias IPVI, Chicago Lions Club y
Comunidad Companera)**



The Chicago Lighthouse
For People Who Are Blind
or Visually Impaired



We are pleased to announce the opening of a Ready to Learn: Preschool for All at The Chicago Lighthouse in September, 2013!

The Chicago Lighthouse has received a grant from the Chicago Public Schools for children age three to five who live in Chicago Public School districts. This grant will encourage emerging literacy and provide early learning opportunities. The CPS grant covers all expenses, making the program **FREE TO ELIGIBLE FAMILIES!**

The Preschool program will be half-day, five days a week, in the morning and the afternoon, for children ages 3-5 years. Students may enroll in one half-day session, Monday through Friday.

The Chicago Lighthouse Preschool for All offers programs for a total of 40 eligible children residing in Chicago. To be eligible, students must live in neighborhoods with zip codes 60607, 60608, 60612, and 60623 and meet the criterion for admission to our school. Additionally, children who are visually impaired are also eligible if they reside anywhere in Chicago.

The Chicago Lighthouse Preschool for All Program offers an opportunity for both children with and without visual impairments to learn in the same setting. Use of adapted, multi-sensory materials will benefit all students. **Our program will instill sensitivity and a respect for diversity.** All materials, toys and books will be adapted to meet each child's individual needs, whether it is in Braille, large print or regular print.

Also, on site is a therapeutic day school approved by the State Board of Education for children with multiple disabilities including vision impairments. All staff are certified and familiar with working with children from all backgrounds.

Register now; spots are limited to 20 children for each session.

**For more information, call Mary Zabelski at 312.997.3675
or email her at mary.zabelski@chicagolighthouse.org**

www.chicagolighthouse.org/Preschool



There is still time to register!

Two **FREE** Upcoming Trainings in Joliet
by Hearing and Vision Early Intervention Outreach

December 10: Functional Hearing Screening Training

- 👉 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at Joliet Junior College
- 👉 Please register online at www.bit.ly/HVEIO
- 👉 If you have any difficulty registering, contact [tara.lund@illinois.gov](mailto: tara.lund@illinois.gov)
- 👉 CPDU 2.5 credit hours (each training)
- 👉 EI 2.5 hours credit hours Assessment (each training)

Description:

In vision, participants will learn how and who to screen as well as who is at risk of vision impairments, warning signs, types of screening tools, and when/how to refer for further assessment/services. In hearing, participants will learn the types and causes of hearing loss, its impact on development, communication and language use of a screening questionnaire, when/how to screen, and when/how to refer for further assessments and services.

Gail Olson, HVEIO Program Coordinator

Hearing and Vision Early Intervention Outreach
Illinois School for the Deaf and Illinois School for the Visually Impaired
125 Webster Avenue
Jacksonville, Illinois 62650
[gail.olson@illinois.gov](mailto: gail.olson@illinois.gov)

bit.ly/HVEIO





PARENTS' NIGHT

at

**The Chicago Lighthouse North
222 Waukegan Road
Glenview Illinois 60025**

- 3rd Tuesday of each month, from 6:30pm to 8:00pm
- Parents of children ages Birth-6
- Grandparents, other adult family members and friends are welcome
- Child care will be provided

Tuesday, December 17, 2013

Dr. Joseph Wallach PhD, Clinical Psychologist/Director Bergman Institute for Psychological Support

- Adjusting to your child's diagnosis: working through feelings of grief, anger, guilt, helplessness and isolation.
- How to gain a positive attitude

January 21, 2014

The Doctor is In: Dr. Kara Crumbliss, Director of Low Vision Services at The Chicago Lighthouse

- The role of the Low Vision Optometrist
- Low vision devices
- Various eye conditions will be discussed
- Time for questions

February 18, 2014

How To Be An Effective Advocate For Your Child

A trained Parent Advocate from Family Resource Center On Disabilities (FRCD) will be the presenter. FRCD provides parents of children with disabilities with information, training, assistance and support.



Don't miss these informative, supportive, and bonding evenings!

RSVP TO:

Pam Stern, Manager of Youth and Adult Enrichment Programs 847.510.2054 or
847.510.6200

pam.stern@chicagolighthouse.org



Join Us!

2014 IAER Vision Conference
February 13-14, 2014

Hyatt Regency Schaumburg Chicago
1800 East Golf Road
Schaumburg, IL 60173

The 2014 IAER Vision Conference Registration form is **NOW AVAILABLE**. Please download the form and submit it and payment to: IAER Vision Conference, Illinois School for the Visually Impaired, Cindy Miller, 658 East State St, Jacksonville, IL 62650

Please direct any questions to George Abbott
Conference Chair, at gabbott@afb.net

Hotel reservations can be made at
<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/ILAER2014>



For parents of children with
Visual Impairments

Home Schooling a Blind Child

Posted by Scott Truax

We are pleased to feature a FamilyConnect community member as a guest blogger today, writing about her experiences choosing to home-school a child who is blind. Susan has been a registered/licensed medical technologist for 35 years. She writes, "I finished my BS degree 15 years later in health education and worked as a social worker in adoption and therapeutic foster care. I earned my MS in Special Education 10 years ago. My husband and I have been foster/adoptive parents for 32 years, adopting 11 of our 14 children and fostering 30+ children. We have been a home school family for approximately 20 years. In my spare time, I'm a notary public and love to do weddings!"

By Susan Harper

We are a home school family. We started home schooling 22 years ago. Since we have parented lots of adopted children with a variety of issues and some with very real behavioral problems, we finally after much discussion and thought, decided to home school.

We had debated about home schooling for several years, thinking how would we manage? What would we use for books? Where would we find materials? Were we smart enough to do this? You need to know just a little about us at this point to gain a little insight into our thought process. My husband was a seminary student, working on his Master's Degree in Theology, a former music teacher, working part time as a social worker in a nursing home. I worked full time for a mental health agency supervising and supporting therapeutic foster care placements.

How would we manage? We were both working and my husband was going to school. We also had 5 children, ages pre-school, 5th grade, 6th grade and high school. The decision was made over the next summer to home school. We found a curriculum that we liked, after researching many different kinds. There are lots of different curricula out there. We found one that we thought we could manage and that would be good for this young man.

We rearranged our work schedules so we only needed daycare 3 days a week. We found a great licensed home daycare provider. She agreed to monitor the children's day and make sure their assignments got done. We corrected schoolwork on the weekends and made assignments for the next week. We started out to home school one child, but both boys wanted to be schooled together. The other twin was the class president. This took a lot of planning.

Home Schooling a Blind Child

Now, how does any of this relate to home schooling a blind child? Those children grew up and went to college and the house was quieter, with only 2 children at home. At this point my husband is a full-time pastor and I am teaching school. We decided to apply to provide foster care for special needs children. We had several placements over the ensuing years. One of those placements was two beautiful baby boys who came to us from the NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit). We specialized in providing foster care to premature infants. The plan was for us to foster while an adoptive family was found.

One of the twins had hydrocephalus and was eventually shunted with a permanent shunt. The other little boy was blind, due to detached retinas from retinopathy of prematurity. After 5 surgeries involving numerous trips to New York, the surgeries did not work and he ended up with no vision. An adoptive family was found and very interested in adopting the boys. A meeting was set up. Just before the day of meeting the prospective new parents, we got a phone call from the worker. This family was expecting and 3 babies would be too much. By now the boys had

been with us for 6 months and were making good progress. They were so cute. However, we were "just going to foster." We felt we were too old to adopt at 55 and 58 years old. It just wasn't in the picture. Now we were still home schooling a grade school child, a middle school child, and almost finished with a high school child, looking at college.

Long story short, there were two families who would adopt the boys into different homes out of state. We'd had these two boys for a year and a half at this point. We couldn't let them place these two little boys in separate homes. They had well-established medical care and loved each other and us. So, they stayed and were our last adoption.

When these two little guys reached pre-school age, they had to be transitioned into the public school system to continue to receive services. At this point, Services for the Blind would no longer work with our family, but would work with the school. We went through all the soul searching, agonizing feelings of inadequacies that we did when we first home schooled.

Well, by now we both had Master's Degrees. Mine was in Special Education. We did not have any experience working with a visually impaired child, let alone a blind child. How would we do this? Money was not the issue because I was working at home providing foster care and home schooling our other children. But still, how would we be able to do this? Where would we find materials and help? Services for the Blind in Connecticut told us they couldn't help us if we home schooled, they had to have an IEP once a child reached public school age. If you home schooled in Connecticut, you have no access to any public school programs. It is either public or home. What were we going to do?

We weren't happy with the services at the school. I attended transition meetings for a year before the boys started in pre-school, then almost weekly when they started. Our preferences were ignored. The staff was not trained prior to the children starting school. The TVI came once a week to train school staff and

work with our son for an hour. We watched school staff and they didn't have a clue. They didn't want to hear from us how we did things to help our son succeed and learn. They wouldn't let our son have his cane in the classroom. It hung on a hook outside the door in the hallway. They would put all of his special services at the same time as the TVI came, with 4 to 5 adults working with our son. We told them that he couldn't tolerate overload.

The last straw came when I picked my son up at school and found him sitting in the wet sand box, with an aid by his side, telling him to put the sand in the bucket. The sandbox was so full of children, he couldn't move. His cane was outside the fenced-in play area, thrown in the grass. I had to hunt for it. I picked the boys up, brushed my son off (he was covered in wet sand), and we drove home. That was the day I figured I probably could do at least as well as the public school. I had learned Grade I Braille by then and had adapted toys and books.

But where was I going to find curriculum material? You know, the internet is a wonderful tool. I got on and starting typing in "free braille stuff," etc. That was how we got started. Nothing worthwhile doing is ever easy, but we made it work!

Now we are into our 4th year home schooling a blind child, if you consider the pre-school work that we did. Our son is 7 and has a pretty good, well-rounded program with OT, PT, Speech, O&M, TVI, Sect. 28 (Center-based socialization program one afternoon a week), and 5 mornings a week with me teaching basic math, reading, and braille skills with the help of our TVI. It took us two and a half years to put this all together. We have three still in home school, and one in college. It takes a lot of work, coordination, and cooperation. It doesn't happen overnight. I have a motto I'll share. "NO SERVICES ARE BETTER THAN BAD SERVICES!" This is my mantra and I'm sticking to it! Blessings!



FRCD



Family Resource Center on Disabilities
Providing parents of children with disabilities with information, training, assistance, and support

REGISTER FOR YOUR FREE PARENT WORKSHOP TODAY!

Space is limited; registration is mandatory Please visit www.frcd.org or call 312-939-3513 for registration and workshop location.

Reaching Our Dreams
Tuesday, December 17, 4pm

(A.Y.L.P.) Advance Youth Leadership Power Meeting
Thursday, December 19, 4pm
Friday, December 27, 4:30pm

The Empowered FE-FE's
Tuesday, December 24, 4pm

The Family Resource Center on Disabilities (FRCD) offers parents of children with disabilities birth to 21 years old, their helpers, relatives, professionals, and interested community members no-cost training and workshops, telephone and e-mail assistance, and resources to help claim their role as the child's most effective and significant advocate.

You are invited to contact FRCD for information, resources, support and training.

1-312-939-3513 | info@frcd.org | www.frcd.org
20 East Jackson Blvd., Room 300
Chicago, IL 60604

ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION OF THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

AER

Watch hours of captivating speaker recordings on the AER Knowledge Center.

FEATURED SESSION

Tactile Map Making



Most young students with visual impairments learn best with "hands-on" materials. Using tactile materials, such as a map, is a concrete way to build abstract spatial concepts. Good tactile maps can condense a large, complex environment into a small, functional overview of the area. Students can learn to quickly explore the tangible map - gleaning critical spatial and orientation concepts. These tactile maps also help to develop good mental maps.

Watch This Session for FREE!

<http://aerbvi.sclivelearningcenter.com/index.aspx>

IN THE NEWS



Building Relationships with Families: Bridging the Gap Between Knowing and Doing

Teacher-family communication is considered an important factor for student success. These interactions are shaped, in part, by the family's culture, education, socioeconomic status, and prior experiences with schools. Teachers also bring to this interaction their biases, including

expectations and personal and professional experiences about home-school communication.



Various Eye Diseases and Some of their Functional Implications - Along with Suggested Non-Optical Recommendations

In this presentation, functional implications of various eye diseases will be discussed. Special consideration will be given to the two leading causes of vision loss for adults-age related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy, along with two major causes of vision loss for children-optic nerve hypoplasia and cortical vision impairment.

MORE: <http://aerbvi.sclivelearningcenter.com/index.as>



Continuum of Evaluation Services: A Model for Residential Schools for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Evaluation of students with visual impairment is often a difficult task for a public school to provide. Low incidence populations are not discussed extensively in professional preparation programs. Additionally training that is provided to professionals cannot address the extreme variability found in this population.

MORE: <http://aerbvi.sclivelearningcenter.com/index.aspx>

AER Education Brief

Scott Bennett, Partner Relations Analyst, Multibriefs, 972-373-2091

AER Education Brief is a monthly e-newsletter from the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, with highlights from courses and educational programs from past conferences.

Subscribe — it's free!

<http://multibriefs.com/optin.php?AERBVI>



Partners with Santa to Promote Braille Literacy

Dr. Marc Maurer <<http://www.nfb.org/marc-maurer-bio>>, President of the National Federation of the Blind <http://www.twitter.com/NFB_voice>, said:

Santa approached the National Federation of the Blind several years ago and asked us to be his helpers. I'm quite fond of the fellow and was delighted that we could assist him in his work. Braille literacy is the key to success and opportunity for the blind, but unfortunately too few blind children are learning it today. This program will not only spread holiday cheer but will also serve an important educational purpose, as blind children will be able to practice reading Braille as they enjoy their letter from merry Saint Nicholas."

Between November 18 and December 19, parents can go online at www.nfb.org <<http://www.nfb.org>> and fill out a Santa Braille Letter request form <<https://nfb.org/santa-letters>>. The form can also be printed and faxed to (410) 685-2340.

Beginning December 2, the Braille letters from Santa will start going out to blind boys and girls around the country. The Braille letter will also be accompanied by a print copy (for mom and dad to read). Requests for letters must include the writer's name, the child's name, birthday, gender, mailing address, a telephone number, and e-mail address in case Santa's helpers at the National Federation of the Blind have questions.

The deadline for letter requests is December 19, to ensure that a return letter in Braille is received before Christmas.



World Sport Chicago has moved! World Sport Chicago's main offices are now located at 954 W Washington Blvd, 6th Floor, Chicago, IL 60607. Please update your records of our change of address. All phone numbers will remain the same.



GUEST COMMENTARY: Learn how to interact with visually impaired people



I am a visually impaired person. Soon after graduating from Purdue University West Lafayette, I lost a significant amount of my vision due to a disease known as rod-cone dystrophy. Although I have been legally blind now for nearly 40 years, my circumstance has not deterred me from enjoying and participating in many of the same activities as a person with sight would experience....

http://www.nwitimes.com/news/opinion/columnists/guest-commentary/guest-commentary-learn-how-to-interact-with-visually-impaired-people/article_b6986e5b-1500-5dba-a285-35f34fad421f.html

Wary employers thwart prospects for visually impaired job seekers



... Yet blind people remain largely unwanted in the U.S. workplace, despite technological advances that dramatically boost their capabilities. Only about 24 percent of working-age Americans with visual disabilities had full-time jobs as of 2011, according to Cornell University's Employment and Disability Institute....

<http://www.vindy.com/news/2013/nov/04/wary-employers-thwart-prospects-for-visu/>



Patti S. Gregory-Chang has a new e-mail address: pattischang@gmail.com

Patti Gregory Chang
NFBI President
NFB Scholarship Committee Chair



From **Susan Katz**

I no longer work for World Sport Chicago. If you have questions about the Paralympic programs, please contact Stephanie Miller at

smiller@worldsportchicago.org.

Davis Square Park

*Programs for individuals with visual and physical disabilities
4430 S Marshfield Chicago Il 60609*

Adaptive Recreation Saturday Classes

2014 Winter Session

January 11 - March 22

(Fee include all 10 weeks of session)

Fitness

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Ages 15 to 26

Co-Rec \$5.00



Judo

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Ages 15 and up

Co-Rec \$10.00



Leisure Education

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Ages 15 and up

Co-Rec \$5.00



Social Club

1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Ages 15-26

Free

For registration and questions contact:

Christina Moy,

Special Recreation Coordinator

312 747 6107

Christina.Moy@Chicagoparkdistrict.com

www.chicagoparkdistrict.com

Registration begins December 7th

City of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners

Chicago Park District, Michael P. Kelly, General Superintendent & CEO

For more information about your Chicago Park District, visit

www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or call 312.742.PLAY, 312-747-2001 (TTY)





MagWin USB Magnifier/Reader



MagWin USB is truly portable and will install on any Windows compatible computer with no software installation required! Have you ever wanted to check your email or surf the web on the go? You can use the MagWin at a hotel, public library, school, even a friends or family members computer.

Most screen magnifiers today offer a USB version. However, all of these require administrative privileges to install software before they can run. Public computers don't grant installation rights. Private computers can be a very personal item that others won't appreciate you installing software on.

Simply attach it to your keychain and carry it with you every where you go. Just walk up to any Windows compatible computer and plug it in. Within a few seconds, it's ready to use. It's so simple. No License restrictions! No installation! No administrative rights needed! MagWin works when you need it to.

MagWin incorporates our ground breaking screen magnification/reading software into an easy to use software package. MagWin Standard is perfect for individuals who primarily use one computer. If you frequently use multiple computers the MagWin USB will work for you.



MagWin incorporates our ground breaking screen magnification/reading software into an easy to use software package. MagWin Standard is perfect for individuals who primarily use one computer. If you frequently use multiple computers the MagWin USB will work for you.

MagWin Lite is a very simple to use alternative to MagWin. It offers scaled down options found in MagWin standard or MagWin USB for a reduced and affordable cost to you.



For more information go to
<http://clarixusa.com/index.php/products/apps>
<http://www.clarixusa.com/>

2385 Cimarron Dr., Santa Clara, CA 95051
<http://www.clarixusa.com>
408-409-7333
fax: 408-625-7183

Oldies but Goodies: The "Established" APH Product Series

Sound discrimination is important for traveling safely, identifying people, literacy, communication, and so forth. It is important to teach children to make use of environmental noises to enrich their lives. Auditory skills development, just like visual skills development, requires well-thought-out instruction that is provided regularly and consistently. The Sound Matching Boards I & II are tools available from APH to assist in developing this skill.



Sound Matching Board I includes 12 cylinders (four loud and eight soft-sounding) and a circular, 12-hole board. This product develops fine motor skills and auditory matching and discrimination, with the capability of introducing sequential order. It can also be used to teach the concepts of circle, outer edge, center, in, out, clockwise, and counter-clockwise.

Sound Matching Board II includes eight shakers of four different sounds, and an 8-nest base. This product helps develop concepts of a series, directions, positions, matching, and discrimination. It can be used to reinforce the concepts such as left, right, bottom, top, horizontal, vertical, rows, pairs matching, etc.



If you have any suggestions for other products you would like to see highlighted in this monthly feature, please send your comments to Monica Turner at mmtturner@aph.org.

Repair Source for the MaximEyes

Is your old video magnifier MaximEyes in need of repair? Here is a good source, according to one of our trusted Ex Officio Trustees! (\$95.00 for analyzing, but cost is applied against the final invoice.)

ABL Electronics
 314 E. 14 Mile Rd.
 Madison Heights, MI 48701
 248-588-6663
 Contact: Al
 Email: ABL BURK@aol.com

NEW! Consumable Hundreds Chart

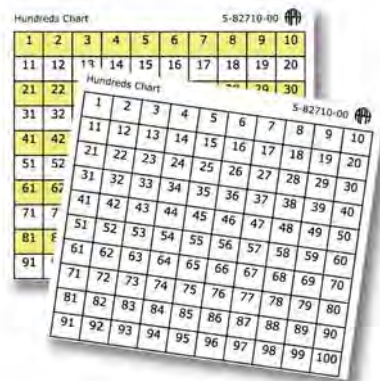
[5-82710-00](#) -- \$15.00

Related Product

Hundreds Boards and Manipulatives: [1-03105-00](#) -- \$140.00

APH's Consumable Hundreds Chart is a graphic organizer for the numbers 1–100. Working with the Hundreds Chart helps learners develop the skills they need to become flexible and fluent problem solvers and meet the requirements of many state standards as well as the Common Core State Standards.

The chart is printed/embossed on heavy white index stock paper. Alternating rows are highlighted to help students with low vision easily track numbers. Five sheets have no highlighting so students can easily color or mark numbers and patterns.



Includes

- 10 charts: 5 with highlighting, 5 without highlighting
- Guidebook, large print

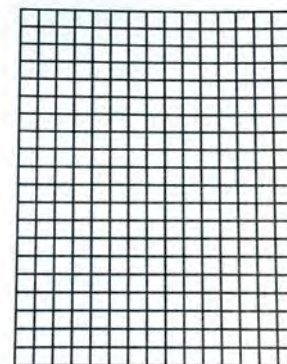
The Consumable Hundreds Chart Guidebook is available as a free download in accessible formats of .brf and .txt from the APH website: www.aph.org/manuals/

NEW! Bold Line Tactile Graph Sheets

[1-04080-00](#) -- \$21.00

An ideal tool to help teachers and transcribers create charts and graphs for students who are blind and visually impaired. Bold Line Tactile Graph Sheets combine tactile and print, which expand APH's graph sheet collection previously available only on embossed paper or print-only paper. Label and embellish these graph sheets using a variety of methods (e.g. braillewriter, line-embossing tools, glued-on or adhesive-backed textured paper or foam, tactile stickers, graphic art tape, etc.).

50-pack Bold-Line Tactile Graph Sheets, 1/2 inch squares in a 15 x 20 inch grid for bar graphs, on 100 lb. white text stock.



IPVI

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GRANT FROM THE FAMILY RE-
SOURCE CENTER ON DISABILITIES**



Join **IPVI** or renew your membership today!

The *Illinois Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments* is a state-wide, non-profit organization that enables parents to find information and resources for their children who are blind or visually impaired, including those with additional disabilities.

Your IPVI membership dues or generous contributions help to support all of our ongoing efforts:

- Regular communications which include: workshops, conferences, training seminars, legislative issues, organizational announcements, products, and advice about raising a child who is visually impaired.
- Offers several \$500 college scholarships each year.
- Publishes a resource catalog which includes anything and everything to do with visual impairment.
- Conducts training and support sessions where parents share experiences and ideas.
- Holds fun outings adapted for children with visual impairments at athletic, cultural, educational, and entertainment settings.
- Represents parents of children with visual impairments at conferences, public hearings, and on committees.

What does IPVI do?

- Promotes and provides information through meetings, correspondence, publications, etc., which will help parents meet the special needs of their children with visual impairments.
- Facilitates the sharing of experiences and concerns in order to provide emotional support and relief from feelings of isolation for parents and their families.
- Creates a climate of opportunity for children who are blind in the home, school, and society.
- Fosters communication and coordination of services among federal, state, and local agencies and organizations involved with providing services to people who are visually impaired.
- Advocates on a statewide level for services to children who are visually impaired and their families.
- Keeps members informed about current proposals and actions which impact on children with visual impairments and their families.

Check one:

Parent/Guardian Membership: \$15 per year.

Child(ren)'s Names: _____

Birthdate(s) of my visually impaired child(ren): _____

My child(ren)'s eye condition: _____

I give my permission to release my name to other parents.

Group/Agency Membership \$50 per year.

Extended Family/Friend Assoc. Membership \$15/year.

Medical Specialist \$50 per year.

Scholarship Fund \$10.00

Donation: \$ _____ (tax deductible)

New Membership

Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) - _____

Email: _____

Please enclose this form along with your payment by check to:

IPVI • P.O.Box 2947 • Naperville, IL 60567-2947

**Have questions or need
more information?**

**Call us at
1-815-355-2098**

**Illinois Association for Parents of
Children with Visual Impairments**
P. O. Box 2947
Naperville, IL 60567-2947

Please contact IPVI to see if you are
up-to-date on your dues at the
address on the left or
1-815-355-2098
Email: ipvi@ipvi.org
www.ipvi.org

IPVI CALENDAR

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| ▶ 12/14 | Lighthouse & IPVI Holiday Party/Toddlers/Small Children | Chicago |
| ▶ 12/17, 1/21,
▶ 2/18, 3/18 | Lighthouse North Parents' Night | Glenview |
| ▶ 2/13-14 | 2014 IAER Vision Conference | Schaumburg |
| ▶ 1/11 - 3/22 | Adaptive Recreation Saturday Classes/Davis Square Park | Chicago |

Please call
1-815-355-2098
for any questions, concerns,
or comments that IPVI can
help you with.

**Newsletter Deadline for
JANUARY 2014 is DECEMBER 15th**



**Check Out
www.ipvi.org**

Calendar of Events!
News and Updates!
Useful Links to Web Sites!
And more...