

IPVI INSIGHTS

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

**February
2012**



Come Join Us for a Day of Fun & Sports for Children with Visual Impairments!

Goal Ball, Roller Sled Hockey,
Hand Cycling,
Judo Demonstrations and Bocce

Inspirational Speakers from the Empowered Fe Fe's!

When: Saturday, February 11, 2012
Where: Chicago Children's Museum
Navy Pier
700 E. Grand Ave., Suite 127
Chicago, IL 60611
Time: Pre-Registered Families 9:00-1:00
General Public 10:00-1:00

To register or for more information contact:
Mary Zabelski (312) 997-3675

Pre-Registration Includes:
Free Admission for Chicago Lighthouse & IPVI Families
Free Shuttle from The Chicago Lighthouse to Navy Pier
(First 50 people only!)

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IPVI Highlights
Bill Bielawski, IPVI President

This month, we mailed our first issue of IPVI's new monthly publication: **IPVI Highlights**. The IPVI board decided that until there is a sponsor for **IPVI Insights**, we will mail a shorter publication to all members each month. **IPVI Highlights** will primarily inform you of events during the coming month. It will also contain a message from IPVI's president, the popular support columns Ms. Vic's Volleys and Ask M@, and, of course, ads. The complete **IPVI Insights** will be on our website www.ipvi.org. I want to talk about the relevance of the events in February in the order that they occur.

The most important knowledge needed by parents of children who are visually impaired is their rights in the special education system. Page 6 shows the February training schedule offered by the Family Resource Center on Disability (FRCD). FRCD holds their sessions **every Tuesday and Saturday** from 10 am to 1 pm. This training is **free**. There are sessions in Spanish and if you do not live in the Chicago area, there are now sessions by phone!

The Chicago Lighthouse for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired has been IPVI's closest corporate partner since our inception in 1986. Page 7 announces "Sweets for Sight" on **February 9th**. The Lighthouse has supported IPVI meetings, our newsletter, and we have cohosted many events through the years.

After seeing to your child's education, you need to ensure that they have fun leisure and recreational activities, including sports. Page 1 invites you to such an event on **February 11th**. The cost is covered by IPVI and the Chicago Lighthouse. If you don't want to hassle driving to Navy Pier, there will be a free shuttle from the Lighthouse.

(Continued on page 20)

MS. VIC'S VOLLEYS
Victoria Juskie, IPVI Treasurer

VOLLEY I

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

No new members have joined during this period.

VOLLEY II

Remember to call Vicki at 815-464-6162 if you need to receive *Insights* via snail mail because you do not have computer access. Even if you called in initially, please call again for quality control purposes.

VOLLEY III

I wanted to say thank you very much for the nice thoughts and sentiments we've received recently about my column and the scholarship awards which everyone helps fund through donations and volunteering. It's nice when you hit back those volleys and let us know what we do counts. Thanks again.

Kudos also belong to Bill, Joan, Rich, Mary, Dawn, Judy, and Gayle, as well as all the other volunteers whose time is so precious and valuable to us all. All of you have given so much that you'll never really know how much it's appreciated and cherished. You along with Lyle have made this journey so much more palatable for me and many others. God bless all of you.

VOLLEY IV

When we're young, for the most part, any time we had an issue, we knew we could run home to talk to either mom or dad. They then would listen intently and give you some sage

SHARING THE VISION, PARENT TO PARENT

Let's have a dialogue. Do you have a question? One of us may have an answer or at least a suggestion. Submit questions and responses for the IPVI Newsletter to Pam Stern, NAPVI Region 3 Representative:

pamstern3@gmail.com

My child is amazing because:

My child is amazing because he never ever complains about his disability!

--

My son is amazing because nothing gets in his way of what he wants to do. He has amazed us of how far he has come by his "I can do it attitude"!

--

My child is amazing because..... no matter how difficult a task we ask of him, he always gives his best. He inspires the rest of us to continually improve ourselves.

--

My child is AMAZING because although I don't show it much, or feel sad about his impairment in front of him, it is inevitable that I do from time to time, and when I get to those times where I wish that he could see me smile at him, or my eyes light up when he comes home from school each week....HE is the one who cheers ME up!! :)

--

My child is amazing because of her personality! She is the most amazing person I know. She is very outgoing and very social. She wants to say hi to everyone at the grocery store. She chats up the waitress at the restaurant, the cashier in the

(Continued on page 7)

advice. Or sometimes, they never said a thing. They just let you talk yourself out until you had figured out what to do on your own. You hopefully at least thanked them profusely for listening before going on your merry way.

Well, now as a middle-aged woman (*did I actually write that? OUCH!!*) I find that as you age, love ones pass away slowly but surely. Sooner or later you may find yourself like me, an orphan. If you're lucky, you have some siblings and a spouse to tide you through. But you get smacked with the reality nonetheless that your emotional safety net is gone.

The ear you bent for all those years just is a memory now. You talk in your heart but it's really never the same. You miss them and now are realizing you're in charge of building a legacy of listening more than talking. See for the most part, people don't want to listen. They just want to talk. How many times do you find yourself making a statement to someone and s/he nods and says, "yeah, I hear you." And then immediately s/he launches into a tyrant about what's happening to her/him, only hearing you out long enough for a chance to be the one to have the spotlight of the moment turned back on him/her.

This takes a toll on typical individuals. Now if you happen to be in a position where illness, disabilities, or a mental disease/condition rocks your world, you realize you have to make time to connect to others in like positions. It helps us find hope in this camaraderie. See, when you find a social group that understands you without you're having to explain everything, it's comforting (maybe not as much as mom's hug, but close).

For example, in the 14 years I've been associated with IPVI, I've had many conversations with parents discussing many things. Once I was asked to help find other blind children in an area so a blind child could have friend(s)

who were blind as well, not just visually impaired. Having another blind friend would allow the child not to have to explain everything. S/he could learn from the friend and vice versa on the same playing field.

I understood that and felt that sometimes I may do a disservice to our readership. I write about what I know; and since it's not dealing with a child who's totally blind, I may be missing sentiments that should be written. I apologize if ever I have and I would welcome your thoughts and feelings. You could either email them to me or call and leave a message. I'll include them in our upcoming issues.

Additionally on this topic of expressing feelings, many times writing them down is very helpful. You can vent the way you used to your parents--only better because you can do it without having to watch your language or spelling and grammar. Once it's written, if it's painful, you can burn the paper to help erase your pain and anger so you can go forward. Or you could save it for another day to ponder. You may choose to share it or not. Either way, you realize that it's empowering to express yourself.

When you're fighting the extra pressures of special needs, you need to vent so you can heal. In order to best help your family, you need to be healed. Give yourself time to grieve for what was perceived to be lost so that when you finally visualize what is before you – your beautiful, loving child whom you cherish -- you'll appreciate your situation better. Lots of times, too, I find writing it out is better than trying to express it to others because they tire so easily of our issues. I found lots of people avoided me once we had vision concerns. It's like they thought it was contagious. Sheesh. Or when they did talk, they never once asked how it was going. Okay, maybe I did wallow in some self-pity there in the beginning, but hopefully not for too long.

I do believe I've since passed that fork in the road and come out on the positive side.

So my tip of the day is on those days when it's

- just you against the world –
- just you to take a stand for someone you believe in, your child –
- just you to be the one to take the brunt force of the reality rippling through life once you take that stand –
- remember, you're stronger than you think you are. Your strength will serve you well.

Remember it's been said if God has brought you to it, he will bring you through it. I truly believe this is true. He brought me angels when I joined IPVI. That's how he got me through it so I'm here for you. I promise I'll listen after I ask you, "How's it going?" Stay warm.



Vicki,

I want to thank you again & again for your encouraging words in every issue of Ms. Vic's Volleys newsletter. I appreciate you taking the time to share your heart, life & faith openly. You have been able to share the difficulties & struggles & challenges in a way that brings smiles, humor, nodding heads of "we understand completely, and a glimpse of hope for the future while enjoying the journey now. It's absolutely priceless perspective that parents, educators & caring people in the community need to hear. We first became familiar with IPVI when the military sent us from Washington State to Illinois & we have remained members even when we moved on to Alaska for 4 years and now Hawaii with the military. Through all the transitions & changes IPVI has been a constant source & wealth of information & inspiration. You have no idea how much my heart leaped for joy as I read about Matt, his introduction to biotics and possibilities opening for our children is heartwarming and so very exciting. I was told early on that my 2 daughters w/ vision loss would be able to do a lot in life but probably not drive. We chose to focus on raising them to be capable & pointing out their "abilities" as much more than anything. I thank you & are grateful to see new technology & horizons opening doors for our children that may have seemed closed. I'm truly at peace whatever happens & hold the sparks of hope for a great future sweetly in my heart. Thank you so much for everything you are doing; it is making an incredible difference beyond what you realize. We appreciate you & everyone at IPVI so very much!!

Paul & Sarah Greenlee
Andrew, Rachel & Zoe

LETTERS OF THANKS

Dear Mrs. Juskie,

Thank you for providing me with the IPVI Scholarship once again. Thanks to your generous contribution, I am still attending school and I am on my way to becoming a website designer. Thank you once again.

Sincerely,

Mary Patterson



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 MBSJF, 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 MBSJF 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 MBSJF 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: 815-464-6162 or vajuskie@aol.com

(Continued from page 3)

checkout line and everyone in the doctor's office. I on the other hand am extremely shy. My daughter alone has brought me out of my shell. Her personality has been a great gift. My daughter has cerebral palsy, hydrocephalus, and cerebral visual impairment. I believe she will overcome many obstacles because of her great outgoing personality and spunk.

--

"My child is amazing because..." He is a loving son still at almost 17 yrs. he has not let is visual impairment limit him.

--

Our son is amazing because each and every day, he continues to show others how much they can see because he cannot. He approaches his blindness as a nuisance not a disability. He turns most all things into a unique ability. He has snow skied since he was 3 years old, drives jet skis on the lake, plays in the school band (marching band next year), has greater technological savvy than most people we know, and his courage is unsurpassed. He is truly his mother and my hero, day in and day out. He is always willing to help other kids with visual impairments and continuously enriches the lives of others who he comes in contact with. He attends a mainstream Junior High (always been mainstreamed educationally) at 14 years old and is an A/B student. A hero is someone with exceptional courage, fortitude and will. That is our son and why he is so amazing. Thanks for allowing me to tell others why my son is so amazing! We, our son included, love being a resource for others. Our hope is to enable and inspire other parents and children who live with visual challenges.

--

She is the only child who is visually impaired in her middle school but never lets it stop her from achieving socially and academically. She has such a positive attitude and thrives to do well.

Next month:

Can you think of a question(s) that you want to ask other parents about, i.e. a developmental issue, working with the school district, IEP advice, etc. This is your chance to raise an issue that you would like addressed in this column.



Newsletter entries will be published maintaining the anonymity of all unless otherwise approved.

ASK M@



Hi everyone. Hope you're doing well and enjoying this "beautiful" weather we are having in this great season of winter in Chicago. HA! As always, thanks to everyone for all the great emails and questions to **ipvi-**

askm@gmail.com. I'm always looking for some more questions and comments so feel free to drop me an email. This month's question is:

Do you plan to attend college? If yes, what are you doing and when?

Great question and one I would like to talk to you about. I am going and the importance in preparing for college at a relatively young age is true. There are so many components that some people forget about and could possibly cause them to not get into the college of their choice, or even lose money from a scholarship if they do not start thinking about it.

My suggestion to parents is start easing your son or daughter into the whole college idea when they are entering 7th grade. Now I know what you are thinking, "Seventh grade? Come on, Matt, isn't that a little young? I can understand at the start of high school, but not at the point where they are still in junior high." Even though this seems like a logical argument, it's not. I learned that the "hard" way, if that is what you want to call it.

Here is one reason to start early: foreign language courses. These are important in a lot of 4-year universities. I have found that most junior highs offer some sort of foreign language courses. If they do, I strongly recommend you TAKE ONE! Even though this may not be the most fun at that point in time and seem pointless, it can help so much in the long run. I'm currently enrolled in Spanish II, and I find it to be so incredibly difficult, it is not even funny. See, I didn't take the Spanish class available in my junior high. Every student that did though and is in his second year of Spanish that I know, now is flourishing in the class and helping their GPA's. For me, it is hurting mine some because this is all so new to me. I strongly suggest that you not let that happen to you because better GPA's mean better col-

lege prospects.

Now you may ask, what if I want to take German as my language, but my junior high doesn't offer it? My answer to that would be, that's fine. It would be up to you if you would like to take another language while in junior high at maybe a park district or library or correspondence course with tapes or CD's. I have no idea on statistics, but maybe it would help to get your mind recognizing your chosen second language before high school, but again up to you.

My second reason is class selection. I understand most are not sure what they want to do in life until they are in at least junior year or even later. But, if you do know what you want to do, pick as many classes that could help you in the college courses you will have to take for the career of your choice.

That's somewhat obvious. But let's say you're not sure about what you want to do. There are different options you could choose. You could ask your guidance counselor. Or another thing to do would be to try to find as many classes you would think would help you in your core classes in college, like math, science, English, etc. Or pick a variety of different types of class electives. See what you may want to do if you're not sure. Try anything and everything, including clubs. You may find something there as well. And don't worry about any vision issues. Teachers are always looking for kids in clubs, and they would love for you to come to their clubs even if accommodations need to be made.

My last reason for starting to plan early is if you have any bit of trouble seeing, finding a good college that recognizes these types of limitations is very important. For example, I know that U of I has great accommodations for all sorts of disabilities, especially vision issues. They are one of the best in the country

for that, as well as for their academics. If this is surprising to you that colleges have accommodations, don't be amazed. There are so many out there with disabilities, and a lot out there with vision issues, so we're not alone.

Finally, to the students, no matter where you are in your school career, if you don't let anything sink in to your brain from any of my columns, remember this, academics are so important. Nowadays, competition is stiff; and there are so many bright individuals out there that your efforts in school must be as high as they can be. Every class and every year counts. Do your best.

Now, I have good news for you if that was discouraging because for some reason your grades were not where you wanted them to be for the last couple of years. If you are in grade school right now, don't worry. Ask for tutoring and start trying your best from now on because if you don't, you will not stand a chance in the academic portions later in high school. You see high school requires a different level of preparation for life. The beautiful thing though is that you practically start fresh at the high school level so you can put better efforts in and that is what colleges really look at in depth.

Now, let's say you are in high school and your grades are not the best, don't sweat it either and just give up. Try your absolute hardest for the remainder of your time in high school. If you pull down some good grades during this time, colleges have human beings selecting students to join their schools. If they see that grades jump, they will see that you now understand the importance of grades.

So the moral of the story is always try, try, try. Never give up because if you give up, then you are guaranteeing failure for yourself.

As always, I have the quote of the month for

you, and it has to do with education. It is by Anthony J. D'Angelo who said:

"Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow."

This just goes along with the moral of this all, which is that learning is an amazing thing, and it can only help you in life.

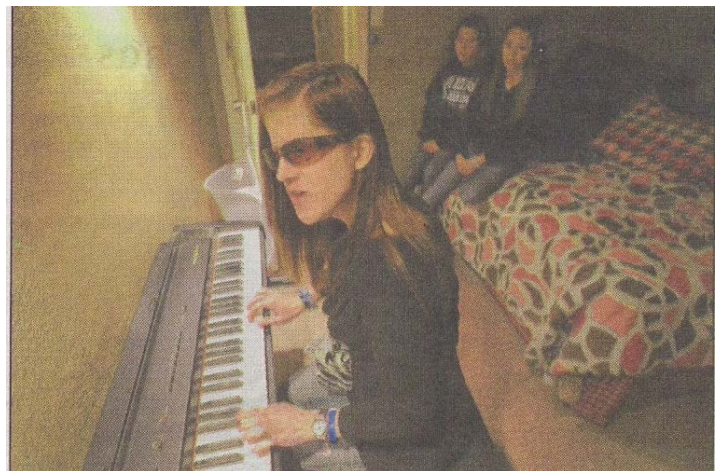
So, in conclusion, remember that the importance in preparing for college at a younger age is incredibly significant. Also while in school, never give up, and try your absolute hardest, because you never know what may happen.

Can't wait to talk to you guys in the next newsletter, and I look forward to all of your questions and comments. Until next time, farewell!

M@

**18 YEARS OLD
27 SURGERIES
1 UNBROKEN SPIRIT**

*Story by Ginger Brashinger / Photo by Brett Roseman
Reprinted from SOUTHTOWNSTAR
SOUTHTOWNSTAR.COM*



Shelley McGrath-Myers plays an electronic keyboard and sings for her sisters, Marissa and Sam Myers, at their home in Frankfort Square.

Shelley McGrath-Myers loves to talk on her cell phone, listen to her iPod and text her friends. She's more devoted to following her favorite TV programs than anyone else in the family, her mom says, and the Frankfort Square teenager can take good-natured ribbing from her stepfather, Frank Myers, and relishes the role of big sister.

In many ways, Shelley is a typical high school senior. She would like nothing more than to be treated like she was typical. But Shelley has a rare condition, bilateral anophthalmia, or the absence of eyes. And because of that, she knows she likely will always be treated differently.

"I'm just like everyone else, except I happen to be blind," Shelley said. "I'm not contagious." Her spirit is, however.

To spend just a short time with this quick-witted, articulate, eager-to-live-and-learn young woman is inspiring. Those who know her say: "I think her story needs to be told," said her mother, Kim Myers, "because she's had so many obstacles to overcome, and so many other people might have given up by now."

The obstacles have been many—and daunting.

Shelley has endured 27 surgeries since birth, four of them for a serious heart condition that required a piece of a donor heart that now is deteriorating. Multiple scoliosis surgeries have left her spine looking "like a railroad track," and then there are the surgeries to continually enlarge her eye sockets for proper facial growth—23 in the first four years of her life.

"She's really strong," said Samantha Myers, 12, one of Shelley's sisters.

Samantha and her younger sister, Marissa, 11, said Shelley is an inspiration to them, and they recognize her strength goes beyond just surviving her surgeries.

Marissa said her friends are curious about Shelley and are sometimes afraid of her. "I feel bad for Shelley because I know she's like everyone else," Marissa said.

That's when Shelley breaks into her favorite song, Gloria Gaynor's "I Will Survive," singing just enough to show off a beautiful voice. "It fits me so well," Shelley said. "That song has my name on it. It's my way of keeping positive."

Shelley has survived more than medical issues. Perhaps the most difficult, she said, has been the way she's been treated by others. Although she has gotten over the cruelty of kids who don't understand that she's just like them in more ways than she is different ("I think I'm not as sensitive as I was a few years ago"), there are some incidents that have forged her strength, perhaps because of their traumatic impact.

An experience at a camp for the visually impaired when Shelley was about 10 years old was Kim Myers' first try at "tough love." Myers sent Shelley to a Minnesota camp run by blind adults in charge of blind children.

"I was told to ignore the phone calls home," Kim Myers said. She did until the fourth night, when she received a frantic call from Shelley, whose camp roommate had tragically died in a drowning accident.

Myers said her next attempt at finding a place for Shelley to learn independence also ended badly. While attending a downstate school for the blind about four years ago, Shelley said she was physically and verbally abused by an employee after medication used to help her

sleep kept her from waking during the night. When the employee found Shelley in a wet bed in the morning, Shelley said the caretaker became angry and pushed her face into the urine-soaked mattress, beat her and threw her into a hot shower. Shelley said while the woman scrubbed her, she told Shelley she would never mount to anything or be able to take care of herself.

Kim Myers reported the incident to the Department of Children and Family Services and said she pursued legal action until it became clear to her that nothing would be done.

"I had to quit," Myers said. "My whole life revolved around revenge." Shelley also moved on.

A new beginning

Shelley transferred to Summit Hill Junior High in Frankfort Square, where she finished her elementary education, graduating with honors, to the delight of her mother.

"This is the same baby that, when she was born, they tried to prepare me for the fact that she would never be more than a vegetable," Kim Myers said emotionally.

Shelley's journey continued, but when in her two years at Lincoln-Way North High School there was no measurable progress in her educational goals, and Shelley still was facing discrimination from other students who didn't understand her special needs, something had to change.

"Some of the kids had a game I call 'jump the stick,' which meant they tried to see if they could jump over my cane," Shelley said. She said others would call her on the phone, pretend to be the friends she desperately wanted, and ask her to sing. She found out later that her songs would be replayed to ridicule and laughter. But Shelley still loves to sing,

and she said nothing will change that.

Choir is her favorite class at her new school, Addison Trail High School, where she is enrolled in a program for visually impaired students through The School Association for Special Education in DuPage County (SASED). "I feel more like an equal there," Shelley said.

The 30 students in her program and students in her regular education classes mean Shelley has friends with and without disabilities. "It's nice to know I'm known as something else instead of being blind," Shelley said. "I was just known as 'the blind girl' in high school before. I didn't even have a name."

Things are happily different, and so is Shelley. She's not only resilient and strong, but she's learning to become the independent person she and her family know she must someday become.

"I'm absolutely not blaming Lincoln-Way for not teaching Shelley because I'm no better," Kim Myers said. "Shelley's a very intelligent young lady and has always done well in school and is socially and conversationally appropriate, but she couldn't cook or do household chores before. I don't know how to teach (those skills to a blind person). Now she's being taught. These people are trained."

Big plans

Shelley's special education class in daily living skills, the "Breakfast Club," is helping her learn to cook and do laundry, even though her family jokes that Shelley is never more the typical teen than when it comes to doing chores around the house.

Nevertheless, Shelley's taste of independence has led her to spread her wings even more. "I was always free ninth period," Shelley said. "I thought that was a waste of my time."

When she spoke to SASED supervisor Joan Allison about possibilities for filling her time, Allison suggested a job and asked Shelley what she would like to do. Shelly said she immediately replied, "Teaching kids Braille."

Within weeks, Shelley found herself doing just that. She teaches Braille to a fifth-grade student and a sixth-grade student once a week at Albright Middle School in Villa Park. "I taught Braille at summer camp in Colorado over the summer," Shelley said. "People just learn well from me. It's giving back. That's why I like it."

Now she's planning a second senior year at Addison Trail so she can continue splitting her school day between life skills and academic classes and continue her work program.

Everything leads to her goals for an independent adulthood. Technology assists along the way, such as her phone helping her send and receive texts via audio.

"I'm thinking about going to ISU," Shelley said. She said Illinois State University has a program to teach the visually impaired, a career possibility.

Shelley also wants to continue pursuing her interests, but her most challenging goal is "to live on my own, definitely," she said.

In many ways, Shelley's future is not any less uncertain than that of any other 18-year-old woman. Despite her adversities, it's not any less bright either.

"Some people think being blind makes you weaker," Shelley said. "Personally, I think it makes you stronger. I think it's made me more of a fighter."



SHELLEY'S SUPPORT SYSTEM

In the words of Shelley's mom, Kim Myers.

"Over the past 18 years, Shelley and I have relied significantly on the Lions Club for costly items that were associated with her blindness one way or another. These items ranged from books, a piano, and an amazing laptop computer to gift cards to grocery and clothing stores to help me provide Shelley with a Christmas when I wasn't able to do it myself.

"Lions members have watched Shelley grow up and helped me grow. They provided summer camps and Christmas parties, and hopefully one day Shelley will qualify for a Lions scholarship.

"The Frankfort Lions Club is represented by the most amazing, kind-hearted, giving men and women, and I am honored that they have taken us under their wings.

"I have also relied heavily on the Illinois Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (IPVI) for educational and emotional support. IPVI is a network of parents who strive to support and connect families whose children are visually impaired. They rely heavily on donations or advertising fees from their monthly newsletter that is published. This newsletter educated parents on IEPs (individual educational plans) for school, technology training, fun activities, gifts to buy for visually impaired children, available scholarships, and a whole lot more! IPVI is an awesome option for parents of visually impaired children. I would be lost without them."

To help

■ Donations can be sent to IPVI at P.O. Box 2947, Naperville, IL 60567-2947. For more information, call 877-411-4784, email ipvi@ipvi.org, or visit www.ipvi.org.

■ Donations can be sent to the Frankfort Lions Club at P.O. Box 223, Frankfort, IL 60423. For more information, visit frankfortlionsclub.com.

Hosted by the Young Philanthropists Board of
The Chicago Lighthouse



7th Annual Sweets for Sight Event

Thursday, February 9, 2012—5:30-8:30pm

The Redhead Piano Bar, 16 W. Ontario, Chicago

Tickets: \$45

Pre-event group rate tickets: 10 for \$350

Tickets will be available at the door for \$55.

Tickets will sell out!

Supporting programs for people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired.
Attendees receive sparkling wine, beer, chocolates by Cupid's Candies,
food by Quartino Ristorante and Wine Bar, complimentary coat check
and live entertainment including love song karaoke.

No one under 21 years of age will be admitted. Business or cocktail attire.

For more information, please call Special Events at 312.997.3679
or events@ChicagoLighthouse.org

The Chicago Lighthouse
Because there is **still** hope.™





PARALYMPIC SPORT CLUB

CHICAGO

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ADAPTIVE SWIM CLINIC

Saturday, February 4, 2012

The dare2tri Paratriathlon program, a collaboration between the Chicago Park District and the Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association, is offering a FREE, one day swim clinic for individuals with physical disabilities and visual impairments.

Swimmers will learn:

- Proper Swim Stroke
- Training Tips and Techniques
- Maximizing your Breathing

All ages are welcome and a basic ability to swim is recommended.

There will be 3 pool lanes available for the swim clinic. Other lanes will be used by the Chicago Park District for lessons and/or programs.

Four Sessions are Available:

Session 1:	10:00am – 11:00am	Spinal Cord Injuries
Session 2:	11:00am – 12:00pm	Amputees
Session 3:	12:00pm – 1:00pm	Visually Impaired
Session 4:	1:00pm – 2:00pm	All Other Disabilities

Location: Fosco Park Pool
1312 S. Racine Avenue
Chicago, IL 60608

Volunteers are needed! All swimmers must complete the Chicago Park District participant waiver. Please note which session you are signing up for.

Please fax or email registration by January 31st to:
Daniel Tun, Special Recreation Coordinator
daniel.tun@chicagoparkdistrict.com
312-296-5982 (office) 312-742-5393 (fax)



Early Childhood Today:

CREATING A PATHWAY FOR ALL CHILDREN

This is a conference that will address six themes of social/emotional development, speech and language, accommodations, early literacy, health and wellness, and best practices for parents, caregivers and professionals who shape the lives of children ages birth to 8 years old.

Visit www.sxu.edu, Keyword: StarNet for workshops and schedule.

DATE: Wednesday, Feb. 29, 2012
TIME: 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (*sign-in 8-8:30 a.m.*)
LOCATION: Saint Xavier University
Orland Park Campus
18230 Orland Parkway
Orland Park, IL 60467

FEE: \$35 (includes continental breakfast, lunch, instruction and session materials). There will be no refunds of fee given.

REGISTRATION: Pre-registration is required and seats are limited. Registrations will be accepted based on a first-come, first-served basis. There will be no on-site or phone registration allowed. When using a purchase order, please fax a copy of the purchase order along with a completed registration form for each participant to (708) 802-6202. Registration must be received by Friday, Feb. 24. To register, visit www.sxu.edu, Keyword: StarNet. For more information, contact STAR NET at (708) 342-5370.

Illinois STAR NET is an approved provider for CPDUs through the Illinois State Board of Education and continuing education for speech-language pathologists, social workers, occupational therapists, and physical therapists through the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. All participants will receive a certificate of attendance.

Note: Childcare is not available at the conference. Parents of children with disabilities up to 6 years old can apply for a family fellowship for a reimbursement stipend through STAR NET at www.swccase.org/starnet. Please click on **Fellowship Info**.



Dr. Michaelene Ostrosky will be presenting this year's plenary session on "The Pyramid Model: Supporting Children from the Base to the Point." The Pyramid Model has developed under the Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. The center is focused on promoting the social emotional development and school readiness of children from birth to age 8. It is a national resource center funded by the Office of Head Start and the Child Care Bureau for disseminating research and evidence-based practices to early childhood programs across the country. This session will include an overview of the Pyramid Model to support young children's social emotional competence and prevent challenging behavior. Participants will learn about the model including the research, philosophy and strategies for this highly appropriate positive behavior support program for early childhood.

We will be streaming the keynote address into additional rooms in order to provide comfort for all attendees.

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www.sxu.edu

Co-sponsored by STAR NET Region VI and Saint Xavier University, in collaboration with SSAEYC, SPEED Cooperative and the Early Intervention Training Program

CONFERENCE

Illinois Family Leaders
Collaboration presents the...



6th Annual Family Conference

Resources and Inspiration for Adult Family
Members and Caregivers of Children with Disabilities

Featuring Paula Kuth

The 6th Annual Conference is featuring Paula Kluth's all day presentation "Do You See Inclusion as a Place or a Process? And 6 Other Questions to Ask Your Child's School." In this interactive presentation, we will explore the philosophy of inclusion and how instruction can be designed for all learners. Participants will discuss the different questions that families can ask their school so that all children benefit and the entire school community is enriched. Information in this presentation can benefit families in Early Intervention and throughout their child's educational career. Planning for education begins in the transition process while children are enrolled in Early Intervention.

Saturday, April 28, 2012

Spalding Pastoral Center
419 NE Madison Ave, Peoria, Illinois

Registration 8:30-9:00am
Conference 9:00am-3:00pm

Hotel Information

Peoria Area Convention and Visitor's Bureau
www.peoria.org

Fairfield Inn & Suites
200 Eastlight Court
East Peoria, IL 61611
309-699-4100

A block of rooms with a special rate is available under the STARNET name. The special rate of \$70 + tax is available for reservations made by March 27, 2012.

FRCD FEBRUARY 2012 TRAININGS

Sessions

(10:00 AM-1:00 PM)
20 E. Jackson Blvd. Room 300
Chicago, IL 60604

Phone Trainings

- 2/9 **Promoción padre eficaz (En español)**
- 2/14 **Procedural Safeguards of IDEA**
- 2/21 **Dispute Resolution**
- 2/28 **Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM/Assistive Technology)**

(For your convenience we are holding 1 hour training sessions over the phone)
(12:00 Noon-1:00 PM)

Sessions

(10:00 AM-1:00 PM)
20 E. Jackson Blvd. Room 300
Chicago, IL 60604

- 2/1 **Seis Principios de IDEA (En español)**
- 2/4 **IEP Workshop**
- 2/7 **Six Principles of IDEA**
- 2/8 **IEP Taller (En español)**
- 2/11 **Transition to Adulthood (Life Skills)**
- 2/18 **Six Principles of IDEA**
- 2/24 **WINMIL (Day 1)**
- 2/25 **WINMIL (Day 2)**

You must register in advance in order to get your materials in the mail.

Please call us at 312-939-3513
or

You may register online at:
www.frcd.org

To view the training calendar go to www.frcd.org and click on Events/Training-Upcoming Events. To register for FRCD's Upcoming Trainings, contact us by phone at 312-939-3513, Monday-Friday, 9am -5pm, or drop us an email at info@frcd.org.



GUILD FOR THE BLIND

Top Tools for Successful Students: We just posted some great recommendations on our website for students. From mainstream products to equipment specifically designed for people with vision loss, you'll find our suggestions with links to manufacturer's websites for more information. Visit

www.guildfortheblind.org and click on the Resources link.

Visit the Guild's Facebook Page: We are posting more content on our Facebook page—topics for discussion, interesting websites, the latest information on what's going on in our community—and we'd love to hear from you, too! You can easily access our page by clicking on the "Join Us On Facebook" link from our website. Screen-reader users can use the mobile version of Facebook at m.facebook.com (no www needed). By clicking the "Like" button, you will receive our frequent posts and links to great information. A random drawing for a special gift will be conducted in February for our Facebook friends. If you would like assistance in accessing our Facebook page, call Kathy Austin at the Guild or email kathya@guildfortheblind.org.

Accessible Nintendo Wii Video Games: VI Fit has utilized the audio vibration and motion sensor functions for some Wii games, like bowling and tennis, so they can be played by people with vision loss. Audio and vibration cues provide the player information on when to throw or hit their ball and give the results of their actions. The games can be played alone or with a friend and are available as a free download. To learn more, visit www.vifit.org

Grants Available for Summer Internships: The Illinois chapter of the National Federation of the Blind is offering scholarships for stu-

dents who obtain an internship for summer 2012. Internships help students build their resumes and gain valuable work experience. Grants are awarded on the basis of academic excellence and service to the community. To learn more, call Debbie Kent-Stein at 773-631-1093 or email dkent5817@att.net.

Described TV Coming by July 2012: The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has ruled that commercial network affiliates of CBS, ABC, FOX and NBC in the top 25 markets must provide 50 hours of described prime time or children's programming per quarter beginning July 1, 2012. Cable networks, including USA, TNT, Nickelodeon and TBS via cable and satellite systems that serve 50,000 or more subscribers are subject to the same rules. To read more, visit www.fcc.gov.

Hear and There Audio Magazine: Hear and There is an audio magazine hosted by Dave Uhlman, an accessibility consultant with vision loss, who provides audio descriptions of recreational activities like museums, nature walks, art shows and more. All of Dave's podcasts and audio files are of real life experiences where details are described that the casual observer might miss. A new addition to Dave's archives includes a detailed description of the moon from the tactile, braille book, "Getting a Feel for Lunar Craters," distributed by NASA's Lunar Science Institute. The book is free. To listen to the audio archives and for more information, visit www.hearandthere.net.

Reprinted from GUILD BRIEFS January 2012, Guild for the Blind, 180 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1700, Chicago, IL 60601-7463, 312-236-8569, www.guildfortheblind.org.



Start Now! Get ready to enter APH InSights Art Competition 2012

Visually impaired or blind artists of all ages are invited to submit artwork for our twenty-first annual international art competition, APH InSights 2012.

Last year, nearly 400 entries were received. From these, jurors selected 83 pieces for the exhibition, which was shown in Louisville at the Annual Meeting last October. From the 83 works selected for display, 32 award winners were chosen and 13 of them came to Louisville to receive their awards in person at the annual meeting.

Artists may enter original artwork created in any medium, including (but not limited to) painting, drawing, printmaking, fiber, metal, or wood.



A Framed Foreshadowment
Artist: Cody Shaw
First Place Winner, Grades 10, 11, 12 Category
APH InSights 2007

The deadline for entries from students in kindergarten through high school is **March 26**. Adult artists have until **April 2** to send in their entries. Visually impaired or blind artists of all ages are invited to submit artwork for our twenty-first annual international art competition, APH InSights 2012.

Complete rules and entry forms will be posted on the APH website by the end of February 2012. You may also contact Roberta Williams at 502-899-2357 or rwilliams@aph.org to receive a copy of the rules and application forms by email, or a hard copy in print or braille.

Mobile Buzz: What's 'APPening @ APH

APH News about iPad and Other Mobile Devices

Did you know that you can read APH's free Downloadable Manuals on your iPad? Once you download the PDF file from <http://shop.aph.org> or <http://louis.aph.org/> simply select "Open in iBooks" from the menu bar at the top of the screen. You will be able to view your PDF using the iBooks app, and the PDF will be saved in your iBook collection.

A complete list of available Downloadable Manuals is available here: www.aph.org/manuals/.

Oldies but Goodies: The "Established" APH Product Series

Time for Art: Art Projects and Lessons for Students with Visual Impairments is a handbook for teachers and parents that explains how to instruct visually impaired students in art, how to handle the media being explored, and points to consider in art program planning. Time for Art consists of a regular print guidebook and a CD-ROM containing an HTML edition of the guidebook, accessible to visually impaired users.

The projects included in the guidebook are:

- Fake Fossils
- Raised Line Drawings
- Sandscript
- Mural
- Aluminum Repoussé
- Papier-Mâché Bowls
- Free-Form Fuzzy Wire Shapes
- Fuzzy Wire Animals
- Mixed-Media Puzzle of Me
- Weaving
- Wire Sculpture
- Pinch Pot
- Coiled Pot



Each project includes objectives, a list of needed materials, the step-by-step instructions, and a companion lesson that often explores other curriculum areas such as science, history, or mathematics. A comprehensive list of suppliers is offered at the end of the guidebook to aid teachers and parents in finding materials for the projects.

Instructors may want to consider using Time for Art as they work with students who are interested in submitting art work for the annual APH InSights art contest. For more information on this contest, visit the [APH Museum website](#).

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 mmturner@aph.org.

MISCELLANEOUS

2012 NFB Writing Contest

The annual youth and adult writing contests

sponsored by the Writers' Division of the NFB will open January 1st and will close April 1st.

Adult contests, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and stories for youth are open to all entrants eighteen years and over.

The Youth Writing Contest, poetry and fiction, are to promote Braille literacy and excellence in creative writing. Entries will be judged on creativity and quality of Braille. The age groups for these authors is divided into grade levels: Elementary, Middle and High School.

Prizes for contest winners range up to \$100 for adult categories and up to \$30 for youth categories.

All contest winners will be announced at the Writers' Division business meeting during the NFB national convention to be held in Dallas, Texas, the first week of July, 2012. In addition, shortly after convention, a list of winners will appear on the Writers' Division Website, www.nfb-writers-division.net First, second, and third place winners in each category will be considered for publication in the Writers' Division magazine, "Slate & Style."

For additional contest details and submission guidelines, go to the Writers' Division Website, www.nfb-writers-division.net.

Robert Leslie Newman
President, Omaha Chapter NFB
President, NFB Writers' Division
Division Website
<http://www.nfb-writers-division.net>
Chair, Newsletter Publication committee
Personal Website-
<http://www.thoughtprovoker.info>



(Continued from page 2 - IPVI Highlights)

For our child to have to good education, we need to have a good relationship which our child's educators. Page 1 lists the annual conference of the Illinois chapter of the Association for Rehabilitation and Education of the Blind and Visually Impaired (IAER) on **February 16th and 17th**. IPVI will exhibit at this conference. IAER has made the conference very affordable for parents, charging only \$35 for both days. The sessions of the conference will give you insight into educating our children with visual impairments. This will help you establish that strong relationship that you need with your child's teachers. You also have the chance to see the latest assistive technology. I hope to see you there.

IPVI

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

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**THIS PUBLICATION IS SUPPORTED
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HILTON/PERKINS
PROGRAM AND (IN PART) FROM A
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
1-877-411-IPVI (4784)**

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

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or PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED**

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**THE TOP LINE... of your address
label indicates whether your dues
are "Paid" or if they are "Due."
Please send your annual dues in
each year.**

IPVI CALENDAR

- | | | |
|--------------|--|-------------------|
| ▶ Feb. 9 | 7th Annual Sweets for Sight | Chicago |
| ▶ Feb. 11 | TCL - Day of Fun & Sports | Chicago |
| ▶ Feb. 16-17 | Illinois AER Vision Conference 2012 | Schaumburg |
| ▶ April 28 | Sensory Safari (ROPARD) | Michigan |
| ▶ April 28 | 6th Annual Family Conference (STARNET) | Peoria |

Please call
1-877-411-IPVI
for any questions, concerns,
or comments that IPVI can
help you with.

**Newsletter Deadline for
MARCH is FEBRUARY 10th**



**Check Out
www.ipvi.org**

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