

IPVI INSIGHTS

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

July
2016



IPVI 2016 15th ANNUAL MEMBERS ONLY ZOO TRIP

Imagine (in the mind's eye) a sensory Zoo experience - listening to the animals, smelling the environment, touching real and simulated animals in their habitat.....well

Saturday, July 16, 2016 at Brookfield Zoo

is the chance of a lifetime.....the only problem? Are you going to be there?

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! Brookfield Zoo is BIG and the choices are many—arrive early and plan on spending the entire day. **Plan to arrive at 9:30am, the Zoo opens at 10am.** Tons of activities are available throughout your day! Your IPVI T-Shirt will be your exclusive passport into all the action.....into the Zoo, the new **Great Bears' Wilderness, the Seven Seas Dolphin Show (with exclusive after show event), and Hamill Family Play Zoo!** Sensory experiences abound!!

Our theme is “Literacy through Experience at Brookfield Zoo”.....ask questions, touch the special exhibits, analyze and enjoy the unique sounds, smells and textures of the Zoo!



Our luncheon, at the Discovery Ballroom, will include parent-educator Mary Zabelski. Mary has worked for 30 plus years in the field of vision education. In 2010, she was recognized by the IAER with the “Distinguished Service Award for Dedication in the field of Blindness and Visual Impairment”; in 2005 The Lighthouse Children’s Program was selected nationally as “The Best School serving children with Disabilities.” Mary is the Co-founder and past-president of IPVI.

Become an IPVI member! Dues paying members receive free admission and parking at our Members’ Only Events — Zoo Outing, Holiday Parties, Picnic, etc. — activities intended to provide social and literacy opportunities for children, parents, teachers, profession-

Inside This Issue:

2016 IPVI Members' Outing	1
Brookfield Zoo Registration & Payment Form	3
Brookfield Zoo Directions	4
President's Report	5
Memories of Heidi Musser	6
Prevent Blindness Urges Public ... Fireworks	7
STARNET July/August Workshops/Webinars	8
Make Our Voices Heard	8
FRCD	8
School Closings and Restructuring ...	9
Assistive Technology and the IEP	9
IPVI Board of Directors	10
July 4th Poem	10
IPVI Membership Dues	11
IPVI Calendar of Events	12



professionals and friends.

Paid membership includes monthly newsletters and invitations to Parent Rights, Adaptive Technology, and Advocacy seminars.

If you'd like more information on how to attend the 2016 IPVI Zoo Outing, or on how to become a member of the "IPVI Family Network", **call Mary Zabelski at (773) 882-1331**. The registration form is on the following page.

**Mail Registration & Payment by
June 30th to:**

Gail Patterson
The Chicago Lighthouse
1850 W. Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60608



**2016 BROOKFIELD ZOO - IPVI MEMBERS' ONLY OUTING
Saturday July 16th Registration & Payment Form**

Attendance is restricted to current (paid) members of IPVI**. All attendees must pre-register, purchase a 2016 Zoo T-Shirt and show current identification at the Zoo. Attendees may be required to sign Release of Liability & Use of Photographs Form. Registration is limited to onefamily per IPVI family membership - parents and their children. **EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS ARE REQUIRED TO PURCHASE SEPARATE IPVI MEMBERSHIPS.**

Family Name: _____ IPVI Current Membership [y/n] _____

Address: _____ city/zip: _____

e-mail: _____ H () _____ - _____ C () _____ - _____

1) MEMBER: _____ Age: _____ T-Shirt: (infant), (small), (med), (large), (X-lg)

2) SPOUSE: _____ Age: _____ T-Shirt: (infant), (small), (med), (large), (X-lg)

3) CHILD: _____ Age: _____ T-Shirt: (infant), (small), (med), (large), (X-lg)

4) CHILD: _____ Age: _____ T-Shirt: (infant), (small), (med), (large), (X-lg)

5) CHILD: _____ Age: _____ T-Shirt: (infant), (small), (med), (large), (X-lg)

6) CHILD: _____ Age: _____ T-Shirt: (infant), (small), (med), (large), (X-lg)

**** Double and Triple extra large shirts available at extra cost of \$1.00/shirt.**

Admission to the "2016 IPVI Members' Only Event" includes parking (enter far South lot), buffet lunch, admission into Zoo, Dolphin Show and Hamill Family Play Area. The T-Shirt is required and identifies your participation and assists Zoo personnel in providing accommodations.

Membership Dues (\$15.00/year per family	
Total Number of Zoo Admission T-Shirts @ \$10/person	
Additional Tax Deductible Donation to IPVI	
TOTAL MONEY INCLUDED - PAYABLE TO IPVI	

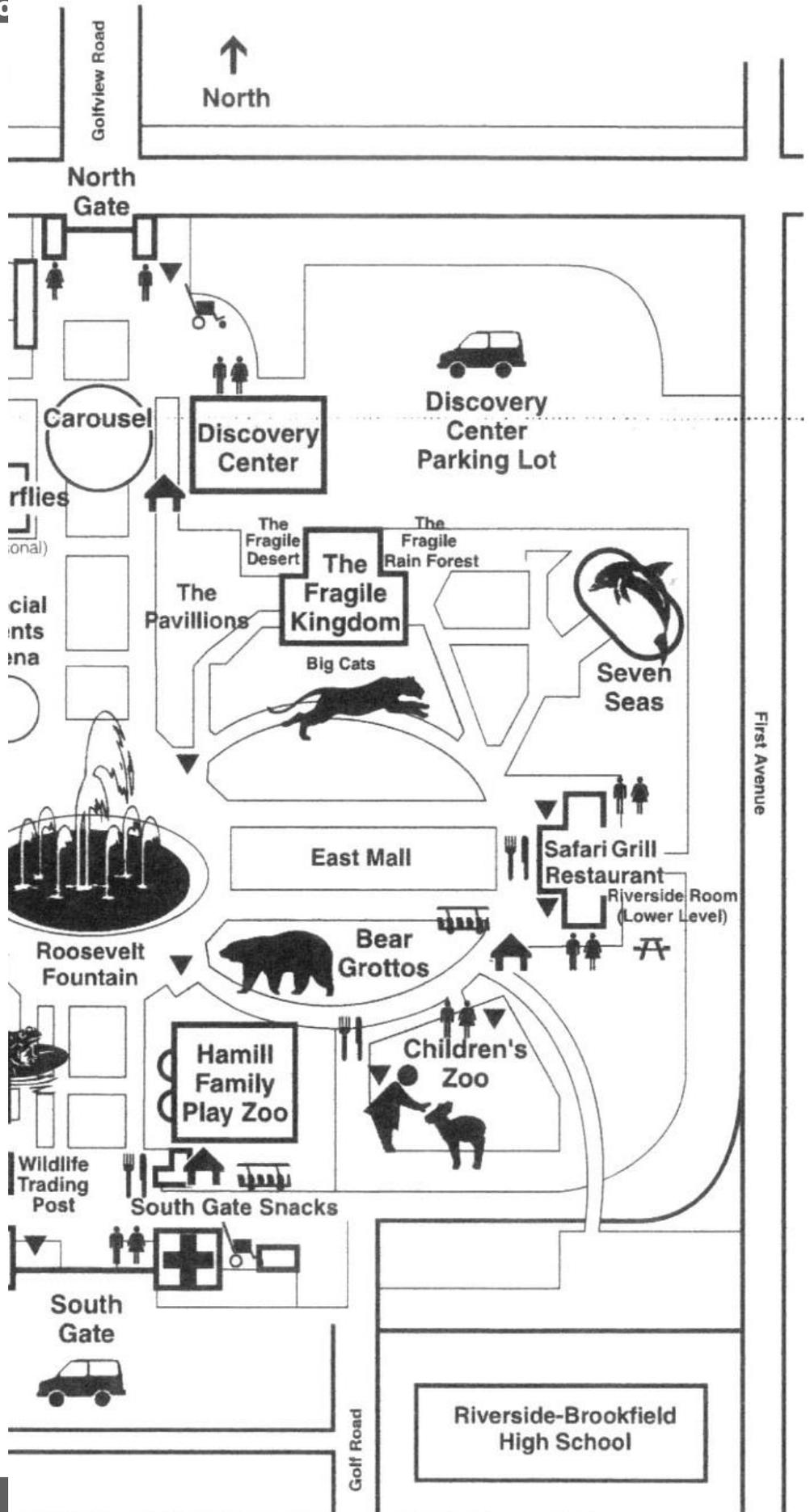
REGISTRATION CLOSSES ON JUNE 30th, 2016

**IPVI is funded from member dues, activity/event participation fees, & private and public donations. IPVI benefits are available to anyone who needs and applies for membership, regardless of their ability to pay. IPVI is an all volunteer organization. We sincerely welcome your participation, support and ideas. We focus on supporting families challenged by visual impairments.



We are gathering in the Discovery Center. We are to park in the Discovery Center Parking Lot. We need to enter at the SOUTH Entrance, not the main entrance. To get to the South Entrance, take 1st Avenue to Ridgewood Road (the first traffic light south of 31st street). Go west on Ridgewood to Golf Road. Turn right on Golf Road to the South Entrance Parking Booth (See map).

At the South Entrance Parking booth, say that you are with IPVI and you will not have to pay for parking. After the south parking booth, stay to the right and tell the next gate guard that you are with IPVI and they will let you on to the road leading to the Discovery Center parking lot. Come to the Discovery Center to check in and get your shirts and Zoo map. See you all



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Filiberto Almendarez III

Almost here! IPVI's Brookfield Zoo Outing is right around the corner.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, July 16, 2016. Start time 9:30am. Come and enjoy all the activities IPVI Membership has to offer. Also, avoid the lines and send your membership dues along with your T-shirt order. Just pick up your shirts that day. You may notice, I'm a little excited. The reason, this was my first event as an IPVI member and I cannot wait to welcome back our children. Some who are now adults advocating for progress. Oh, can't forget the parents and new members. Welcome! Say hello, share a story and stay for the Group picture. Remember to smile. You never know where the picture may end up. Also, Mary Zabelski will be our Guest Speaker. She is also our Vice President of Services. Mary has made extraordinary contributions to the Blind and Visually Impaired community, which she will share along with her beautiful life story. I have had the pleasure of knowing Mary through my journey in life and I am thankful for her as well as my fellow IPVI Board Members, especially for their support and efforts.

Lastly, school time is ending and summer is starting. Remember to Thank Your Educators for all that they do; the creative, patient innovator trying what works. I Thank You on behalf of my son and all our Children.

SEE YOU IN JULY!



MEMORIES OF
HEIDI MUSSER

WHY I LOVE BRAILLE...?

Prepared for: IPVI Insights - Issue June 2016

The answer is so SIMPLE: When the Chicago Public School teachers did not think I was capable of learning Braille, my mother, Erika Musser, taught herself Braille and then taught me! She believed in my capabilities, when the teachers did not or did have the time to spend with me.

Non-Braille readers assume that Braille is too difficult to learn. That's a WRONG assumption! My mother and Tina Egle, Justin's mother from Glenview, who embraced the idea to learn Braille to teach her son, claim that learning Braille is actually a lot of FUN, especially in small groups of parents getting together.

Fifteen years back in May 2001, former U.S. Senator Paul Simon honored us with his visit for the creation of the Children's Braille Book Collection at the Skokie Public Library. The idea came about, because I was frustrated helping out at Hines Elementary School in Morton Grove, IL, teaching reading Braille to Akash Patel. It was an impossibility to locate within Illinois State libraries two copies of a book in Braille for a blind tutor AND blind student reading together.

Senator Simon died in December 2003, but the Skokie Public Library still offers us a warm welcome for get-togethers, such as:

IPVI parents learning Braille together in a friendly one-on-one based environment with blind tutors assisting.
Blind Braille Buddies of various ages from

various school districts meet for reading Braille books and discussing them.

It's so simple and cost free! Please e-mail my mother (eamusser@msn.com) or call 773-412-4454 and we resolve together transportation problems and the specific time of once weekly get-togethers on weekends or evenings. We can also meet at other libraries or even at private homes, if more convenient. (Please note: Sighted Braille readers learn to read using sight and not their sense of touch.)

Before making a "yes" or "no" decision on the Skokie Public Library's friendly offer, I would like to offer you a few thoughts to ponder:

Thomas Jefferson tells us in the *Declaration of Independence*: "We hold these Truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." For me, happiness means to grow intellectually by reading quietly, studying on my own, and having an opportunity to discuss what I read and to offer my own thoughts and interpretation. Why are blind students robbed of this happiness?

The foundation document for the legal system in America is the *U.S. Constitution*. This document contains provisions that guarantees to Americans many rights, but the right to read is not among them. Why? At the time of the founding of the United States, part of the population was still enslaved. Teaching slaves to read was prohibited. If slaves learned to read, they could communicate with each other through the written word. They could learn of the promise contained in the *U.S. Constitution* that persons in the United States have rights. They could plan to effect changes to the circumstances they lived in. Reading was -- and still is -- means to empowerment. Yet, slave

owners wanted to keep their slaves powerless. Was I supposed to be kept *powerless and without a voice* to speak up just like a "slave?"

"Free People Read Freely" is a slogan posted at all libraries all over the nation to observe Banned Books Week. All throughout my earlier years in education, I was "banned" from practically reading my own books in class.

In her book *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf imagines what would have happened had William Shakespeare had an equally gifted sister named Judith. During Elizabethan England, she would definitely not have had the same education and work opportunities -- simply, because she was a woman. My life used to be similar to the life of Judith Shakespeare. Fortunately, I was able to escape the fangs of societal expectations for a blind female living in the twenty-first century.

My mother and I suggest that we come together to try to build a nationwide "model" to solve the shameful Braille illiteracy problem. Let us prove the immense power of parental love! Senator Paul Simon would be extremely proud of us and most importantly, our children would become Braille lovers.

* * *

I welcome your comments.

Please write me at: hmusser@msn.com



Prevent Blindness Urges Public to Celebrate Independence Day Safely, Leave Fireworks to Competent, Licensed Operators in Authorized Displays Only

CHICAGO (June 8, 2016) – According to the latest data from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), an estimated 7,000 Americans spent part of their Fourth of July holiday in the emergency room in 2014 due to fireworks injuries. And, 19 percent of those injuries were to the eyes.

Burns were the most common injury to all parts of the body, except the eyes, where contusions, lacerations, and foreign bodies in the eyes occurred more frequently. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, approximately one third of eye injuries from fireworks result in permanent blindness.

The CPSC also stated that children younger than 15 years of age accounted for approximately 35 percent of the estimated 2014 injuries. And, children 5 to 9 years of age had the highest estimated rate of emergency department-treated fireworks-related injuries.

Firecrackers and rockets are unpredictable. Some explode prematurely and rockets can take different flight paths than expected. Sparklers can burn up to 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit.

To help keep consumers safe during the Fourth of July holiday and throughout the year, Prevent Blindness supports the development and enforcement of bans on the importation, sale and use of all fireworks and sparklers, except those used in authorized public displays by competent licensed operators. The group works with leading organizations to educate the public on the dangers of consumer fireworks and endorses legislation to help protect adults and children from needless injuries from fireworks.

According to data from the United States Eye Injury Registry, the largest proportion of injured persons from fireworks were bystanders, not the person actually igniting the firework. Prevent Blindness urges

the public to attend only authorized public fireworks displays conducted by licensed operators, but to also be aware that even professional displays can have accidents as well, and all those attending should always be extra cautious.

If an eye accident does occur, minimize the damage to the eye:

- Do not** rub the eye. Rubbing the eye may increase bleeding or make the injury worse.
- Do not** attempt to rinse out the eye. This can be even more damaging than rubbing.
- Do not** apply pressure to the eye itself. Holding or taping a foam cup or the bottom of a juice carton to the eye are just two tips. Protecting the eye from further contact with any item, including the child's hand, is the goal.
- Do not** stop for medicine! Over-the-counter pain relievers will not do much to relieve pain. Aspirin (should never be given to children) and ibuprofen can thin the blood, increasing bleeding. Take the child to the emergency room at once - this is more important than stopping for a pain reliever.
- Do not** apply ointment. Ointment, which may not be sterile, makes the area around the eye slippery and harder for the doctor to examine.

For more information on the dangers of fireworks, please call Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020, or visit preventblindness.org/prevent-eye-injuries-fireworks.



There are still opportunities to participate in our upcoming July and August Workshop/Webinars.

You may obtain complete workshop/webinar descriptions and the registration form in our catalog on-line at www.swcccase.org/starnet. If you have any questions regarding registrations, please contact our office at: starnet@swcccase.org or at 708-342-5370.

STAR NET Region VI
6020 West 151st Street
Oak Forest, Illinois 60452
708-342-5370



FAMILY CONNECT WEBSITE

Mobilizing to Make Our Voices Heard A Joint Teleconference of the American Foundation for the Blind and

American Council of the Blind

Save the Date--July 13, 2016, 3pm Eastern

In an exciting development, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is proposing to expand the number of hours of described television that will be required of the nation's top networks. It is critical that the FCC hear from as many of us as possible with our expressions of support for their proposal and to help build a strong record showing how important, useful and enjoyable described TV is for our community. Both AFB and ACB will be preparing formal comments to respond to this proposal, but we cannot do this work alone. Our community needs to make it crystal clear to the FCC, and to the broadcast and cable/satellite industries as well, that we are committed to seeing described TV become the rule and not the exception.

On a much less happy front, the Obama Admin-

istration has determined, yet again, to delay movement on the issuance of regulations clarifying the application of the ADA to online-only places of public accommodation. Most recently, the Administration scuttled a set of proposed federal regulations developed by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) which, once finalized, would have provided even greater clarity about the web accessibility obligations of state and local governments. Now, to try and pick up the pieces, the DOJ is asking advocates yet again to weigh in and share our views on the importance of web access to governmental programs and services.

On Wednesday afternoon, July 13, beginning at 3pm Eastern, you are invited to join a national teleconference jointly hosted by AFB and ACB to learn how you can, with a simple email, let policy makers know exactly how you feel about these two vital issues. While there are important legal and other substantive questions that both AFB and ACB will be providing written comment on for both the FCC and the DOJ, we cannot do this work alone. A strong showing by our community will be decisive in making any progress toward expanded described TV and web accessibility.

For further information, contact: Mark Richert, Esq., Director, Public Policy, AFB (202) 469-6833 MRichert@afb.net

this issue impacts students with disabilities along with strategies for students who have been or will be affected by a school closing or other form of district restructuring. Katherine Gladson, Equal Justice Work Fellow at LAF presents this webinar.



Assistive Technology and the IEP

The appropriate implementation and use of assistive technologies has the ability to increase abilities and provide greater accessibility to educational opportunities for eligible students with disabilities. Assistive technology devices and services can be used to extend physical, social and communication skills and provide the means for academic inclusion. Many students with disabilities have successfully used assistive technologies to minimize barriers to gain access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Susy Woods, Public Policy and Education Liaison for the Illinois Assistive Technology Program (IATP) presents this webinar.

Family Resource Center on Disabilities
312-939-3513 | info@frcd.org
www.frcd.org



School Closings & Restructuring: What Parents of Children With Disabilities Need to Know

School closings have impacted urban school districts across the nation. There are important things that parents of students with disabilities should know if their child's school closes. State and federal law unquestionably require that the needs of the student drive special education services and instruction-no matter what changes are happening at the school or school district level. This presentation provides an overview how

Please contact IPVI to see if you are up-to-date on your dues at
1-773-882-1331
Email: ipvi@ipvi.org
www.ipvi.org

IPVI

P.O. Box 316634, Chicago, IL 60631

1-773-882-1331 • Email: ipvi@ipvi.org • www.ipvi.org

PRESIDENT

Filiberto Almendarez III
5323 N Delphia Ave #124
Chicago, IL 60656
(773) 693-5713
falmendareziii@yahoo.com

OPERATIONS VP

Joan Bielawski
421 Applegate Court
Naperville, IL 60565
(630) 357-8576
wjbielawski@yahoo.com

SERVICES VP

Mary Zabelski
6153 N. Nettleton Avenue
Chicago, IL 60631
(773) 882-1331
maryzabelski@hotmail.com

TREASURER

Filiberto Almendarez III
(Temporary)

SECRETARY

Dawn Wojtowicz
9188 161st Place
Orland Hills, IL 60487
(708) 590-6447
deeder0477@aol.com

NAPVI REGION 3 REPRESENTATIVE

Pam Stern
1912 Mission Hills Lane
Northbrook, IL 60062
(847) 217-7590
pamstern3@gmail.com

SPANISH TRANSLATOR

Noelia Gamino



Happy 4th
of July

The cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall NEVER choose, and that is the path of surrender, or submission. JF Kennedy ★☆☆



Home of the Free
because of the
Brave



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 316634 • Chicago, IL 60631

Have questions or need more information?

**Call us at
1-773-882-1331**

**Illinois Association for Parents of
Children with Visual Impairments
P. O. Box 316634
Chicago, IL 60631**

IPVI CALENDAR

► **July 16** **IPVI's Annual Zoo Outing** **Brookfield**



Please call
1-773-882-1331
for any questions, concerns,
or comments that IPVI can
help you with.

**Newsletter Deadline for
August is July 15**



**Check Out
www.ipvi.org**

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