



## April 2017 NEWSLETTER

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### **Center's Seventh Annual Recognition Banquet & Fundraiser**

The Center's Seventh Annual Recognition Banquet & Fundraiser will be on Friday, March 31, 2017 at 6 p.m. The event will be held at Barrack's Cater Inn Banquet Center at 1224 W Pioneer Pkwy, Peoria, IL 61615. Tickets are available for \$50 per person and dinner is included. Through a very generous donation, the Center has 10 tickets to give away to Center patrons on a first come/first served basis. After those tickets are given, a Center patron may purchase a ticket at the reduced cost of \$25. Corporate and individual sponsorships for the event are also available. Please contact the office at 637-3693 for tickets and/or sponsorship information. Also, we are looking for silent auction donations. If you have an item or items to donate, please call the office and we can arrange for pickup. All donations are appreciated. Look for the final report on the Center's Seventh Annual Recognition Banquet in the May newsletter.

### **2017 Carol Warren Volunteer of the Year Award: Mike Schmied - The Compassionate Volunteer And Friend**

**By Brian Christensen, Center volunteer writer**

Recently, the Board of Directors of the Central Illinois Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired voted to honor the beloved Carol Warren, who passed away recently, by naming the Volunteer of the Year Award after her. So the first winner of the Carol Warren Volunteer of

the Year Award is Mike Schmied, Center volunteer driver for Tazewell County.

Mike drives the Center's Chevy mini-van every Wednesday, picking up Tazewell County patrons from their residences and taking them to the Center, then taking them home after the meal and program are done. But Mike isn't just a chauffeur, he is a friend to the patrons. Michelle Shute, Executive Director of the Center comments, "Many of the patrons think the world of him."

Leia Stewart, a Center patron and Tazewell County resident that Mike transports on Wednesdays, describes Mike as personable, caring and humble. "He goes above and beyond," explains Leia. He joins them in conversations about what they watched on television, music, the weather, everyday life events and frustrations, and even shares riddles with them that he gets from one of his grandchildren. He carries patron winnings from Bingo not only to the van, but also into their living quarters once they arrive. "If you dropped something on the floor before you left [to the Center] such as a piece of paper, he will pick it up when you return so that you don't slip on it or trip over it and fall." When they go to restaurants as an outing, he reads the menu out loud to everyone in the group.

One of the patrons at the Center had to put his dog down last November, and less than two weeks later, his wife passed away. Mike on his own initiative, went over and spent time with the patron, helping him with extra things, going through mail, and just listening to him.

Mike didn't start his career as a driver. He worked as a civil engineer for the Illinois Department of Transportation. For nearly twenty years, he oversaw various types of road construction projects, then he worked another ten years managing materials inspection and testing. During his last ten years he worked in land acquisition. Through the

years, he enjoyed working with people, being outside, and watching bridges and roads being built.

Then in 2008, he retired. It was around this time that his wife Laura was talking with one of their friends and fellow church members, Mabel Van Dusen, the Executive Director of the Center at that time, about a recent challenge at the Center. Mike recalled Mabel sharing with Laura, "Two of my drivers had to leave for health reasons and I am really in a bind finding a new driver." And so Laura responded with, "Maybe Mike could help you out." A day or two later, Laura told Mike and he responded, "Ok, you volunteered me for something again." Laura answered, "Well, just go talk to her." And he did.

Mabel was a good friend of theirs and after talking with her for a bit he said, "You know what? I will try it." He didn't know what to expect. Mike had not been around blind people too much. After trying it out as a volunteer driver, nine years later, Mike is still driving for the Center.

When asked now what he thinks about volunteering, he says, "I think that the Lord has led me to this. I am a caring person and if I can make their lives (Center patrons) any easier at all, even if it is only one day a week, I will do that."

When Mike is not spending time with his friends at the Center, he is golfing, fishing in the lake behind their house near Hanna City, working in the yard with his wife, working on the house or spending time with his five grandkids. His daughter Jessica lives in East Peoria with her husband Scott and their two children, Emma and Aiden. His daughter Katie lives in Elgin with her husband Dana and their three kids, Doug, Gus, and Melody.

Mike and Laura's son, Doug, passed away 11 years ago, a few days after getting heat stroke during college football practice. This was a very difficult time for them and their loss led them to go to "The Compassionate Friends," a support group for families who lose a child

at any age. They are still involved with this group and help others cope with losing a child. Two years after their son died, they decided to move and build the home they live in now.

Congratulations to Mike for his long term volunteer service and commitment to the Center and again, for being the first winner of the Carol Warren Volunteer of the Year Award!

**Passion Play at the First Church of Nazarene in Pekin: Save the date: Friday, April 14th.**

The First Church of Nazarene will be presenting their "Passion" play. There is no cost to patrons, but donations to the church are accepted. Rides to and from this event will be available. We will plan to arrive at the church by 6 p.m. to be seated and the play will begin at 7 p.m. Please call the office by Thursday, April 13th by noon to reserve your space for this event.

### **Thoughts & Prayers**

Please keep the family of Carol Warren and Michael Morey in your prayers. We are sad to report that Carol and Michael have passed away. Both Carol and Michael were Center patrons, held Board positions, were Board officers, and were actively involved at the Center at various times. Before Carol passed away, she served on the current Center Board of Directors and was also one of the founders of the Center.

### **Carol Warren's Obituary**

PEORIA - Carol M. Warren, 91, of Peoria passed away at 4:07 p.m. Tuesday, March 7, 2017, at OSF St. Francis Medical Center. She was born on March 15, 1925, in Stephenson County, IL, the daughter of Elmer and Bertha Fleugel Messman. She married Jack R. Warren on July 6, 1943, in Jacksonville, IL. He preceded her in death on July 30, 1983, in Peoria. Carol is survived by her children, Richard (Dale)

Warren of Chillicothe, Michael (Penny) Warren of Tampa, FL, and Brian Warren of Crystal Lake, IL; five granddaughters; four grandsons; numerous great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; one sister, June Hayden of Montana; and one brother, Leland Messman of Cheyenne, WY. She was also preceded in death by her parents, two sisters and two brothers. Carol was a member of Mt Calvary Lutheran Church in Peoria and a member of Lutheran Women of Mt Calvary. She was also a founding member and past President of Peoria Area Blind Center and Illinois Social Club for the Blind. Carol received the Central Illinois Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired Founder's Award in 2014. In her earlier years, Carol operated a concession for the blind at the Peoria Post Office in the Federal Building. Memorials may be made to Peoria Area Blind Center or American Cancer Society.

To view Carol's memorial page or to leave an online condolence, please go to [www.remmertfuneralhome.com](http://www.remmertfuneralhome.com).

### **Patron of the Month – Carol Warren**

This article is being reprinted from a previous Center newsletter in remembrance of Carol. Carol will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Carol was born in northern Illinois near Cedarville. Born with a cataract in one eye and after an operation to remove the cataract, an infection developed in the eye, which quickly spread to the other eye. As a result, Carol was blinded in one eye and visually impaired in the other, still able to this day, some light through the visually impaired eye.

Carol began attending the Illinois School for the Blind in Jacksonville at the age of five and continued there through high school, becoming proficient in the reading and writing of Braille. She met her husband, R. J. “Jack” Warren, at the school. Jack and Carol married in 1943 and, after their son, Richard, was born, they moved to Peoria. Carol and

Jack had two more sons, Brian, who resides in Schaumburg, IL, and Michael, who resides in Springfield, OH. Their son, Richard, stayed close to home and he now resides in Chillicothe, IL. Jack passed away in 1983.

During the early years of their marriage, Carol worked at the news stand and concession stand for 15 years at the old Peoria Post Office Building, now called the Federal Building in downtown Peoria. Carol first got involved with a group in Peoria called the Peoria District Association for the Blind. That group met in people's homes, at the Peoria City Hall, at the American Legion, and a variety of other locations for meetings, celebrations, and other types of events for the blind. That group decided that there was a need for a permanent location, a building that they could call their own.

Carol and her husband, Jack, were involved with the committee to run a capital campaign to buy the property that would soon become the location for the new building. The money raised purchased the lot and donations of labor and materials from local contractors and union halls were used to build the current building. The corporation known as The Peoriarea Blind People's Center (now known as the Central Illinois Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired) was incorporated as a not for profit and the building was dedicated in 1955. Carol and Jack were involved with the Central Illinois Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired from the beginning. Carol has been a Board member off and on since 1955, committing her time and expertise to keeping the Blind Center dedicated to its mission for the blind and visually impaired. Carol was the President of the Center's Board of Directors ending in May 2013. Through the years, Carol has also served as the President of the Peoria District Association of the Blind and as President of the Illinois Social Club of the Blind. Carol loves coming to the Center to share ideas and experiences with people who have the same disability of being blind or visually impaired. She loves the friendships she has developed with fellow patrons at the Center. Carol

lives independently and has help from two people who stop by every week to help her with cleaning and other tasks she assigns them. Carol enjoys listening to “big band” music such as Benny Goodman as well as a variety of jazz, country western, classical, and other types of popular music. Carol also enjoys the show “Jeopardy” every weekday afternoon, “Shark Tank” every Friday, and the shopping show “QVC”.

## **Michael Morey’s Obituary**

PEORIA - Michael "Morky" Morey, 60, beloved friend, was called to his eternal resting place at 10:01 a.m. Thursday, March 2, 2017, in Peoria, IL. He entered this world on March 15, 1956, in Peoria, IL, born to Richard and Sophie Morey. They preceded him in death. He was also preceded in death by two sisters, Mary Morey and Carol Morby. He leaves to cherish his precious memory his "acquired family," Ginny, Aleka, Iisha, Ciara, Laevin, Sheli and Tobi; along with his long-time friend, Patrick Fitzmorris. Michael proudly served his country in the U.S. Army from 1976 before being honorably discharged in 1979. Memories and condolences may be sent using [www.peoriafuneral.com](http://www.peoriafuneral.com).

## **Upcoming Events, Meetings, and Holidays**

Wednesday, April 5th – No Open House

Tuesday, April 11th – Board Meeting – 4 p.m.

Wednesday, April 12th – Open House – 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 15th – Jam Session – 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

(Jam Session hours will remain the same throughout the spring and summer seasons.)

Wednesday, April 19th – Open House – Noon

Wednesday, April 26th – Open House – 5:30 p.m.

Friday, April 28th - Granite City restaurant outing – 5 p.m. – Braille menus will be available.

Saturday, May 6th – Center’s Annual Sausage & Pancake Breakfast - 7a.m. to 11a.m. – Held at CICBVI.

Sunday, May 7th – Billy Elliot Musical – Peoria Players Theater – 2p.m.  
(Tickets for this musical must be ordered in advance. Please express interest in going by Thursday, April 13th.)

Tuesday, May 16th – Heart of Illinois Concert at ICC at 7:30 p.m.

### **April Birthdays**

April 2 – Melody Walker

April 5 – Deborah Ice and Joe Carrier

April 7 – Thomas King

April 10 – Bob Ross

April 18 – Ora Thompson

April 22 – Eileen O’Connell

April 26 – Bob Allen

### **Anniversaries**

April 23 – William and Sharon Pfeifer

### **Meal Menus for April**

April 12th – 5:30 p.m. – Lasagna, tossed salad, garlic bread, cake and ice cream.

April 15th – Jam Session – 1 p.m. – Hamburger/tater tot casserole, salad, and strawberry shortcake.

April 19th – Noon – Fried chicken strips, fries, slaw, rolls, baked beans, and dessert.

April 26th – 5:30 p.m. – Beef barbecue, au gratin potatoes, salad, beans, and pie.

Bingo will be played at all Open Houses unless otherwise noted. Reservations need to be called in no later than noon on the day before the Open House.

## **Donations – Monetary and In-Kind**

Thanks to the following for their monetary donations: Gary and Becky Williams; Bob Coney; and Kim Farlin. Thanks to the following for their in-kind donations: Gary and Becky Williams – soda; Gyla Grigsby, Leia Stewart, Ron Selby, and Gayle Workman – Bingo prizes; Earl and Linda Kalb – soda, bleach and an electric mixer; and Verda Mullineux – soda and containers.

## **Volunteer Thank You**

A very special thank you to volunteers Linda and Earl Kalb for all of their hard work around the Center and with the vehicles. We appreciate the both of you and your hard work at the Center makes a huge difference.

## **Interesting Dates Throughout the Month of April**

**April 1 – April Fool’s Day.** Traditionally, this day is an opportunity for playing jokes or tricks on one another. Any tricks or jokes must be harmless and in good taste for the unsuspecting "victim".

**April 20 –Volunteer Recognition Day.** This day honors the legions of volunteers who dedicate themselves to causes and helping others. They are making big and small differences in the lives of millions of people all over the world. We appreciate all of our Center volunteers!



## Free Matter for the Blind & Visually Impaired

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Quote Of The Month – “Don’t worry about failures, worry about the chances you miss when you don’t try.” By Jack Canfield.