



AROUND THE CENTER

CICBVI NEWS – December 2020

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Paula Balistreri, Editor

A SPECIAL GIFT

The holidays are upon us and I want to thank you all for a very special gift. I'm not sure what to call the container it came in – maybe a pocket? A bubble? Or maybe a cupboard? Anyway, I had no idea that when it was given to me back in April it would become a gift that I open frequently. Inside, I find laughter, stories, tales of journeys taken and friendships made. Sometimes I find a little fear, maybe some sadness or even anxiety but underneath those things, I invariably find hope and perseverance. This gift has meant a lot to me. It has cheered me and helped me feel useful. It has increased my faith in the goodness of people in general and it has provided me with some new perspectives. Occasionally, it has even sparked a few bits of creativity and given me a sense of accomplishment. But most of all, when I open that container that you all have given me, I have found love. Love that is continuously being shared between you all and now has found its way into my heart, too. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your lives and I wish you all a very blessed and happy holiday season! - Paula B

Check out the upcoming Zoom events described elsewhere in this newsletter!

SPOTLIGHT ON NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The CICBVI Board has added three new members and are excited to have them join the CICBVI family. They are:

DAVID MURPHY – David is a Global Account Manager with Parker Hannifin Corporation here in Peoria. His spouse, Amy, is a teacher at St. Philomena School and they have two children. Amy shared the CICBVI story with her school's student council and they recently gave a generous gift (over \$1000!) to the Center. David is excited to join the CICBVI team and support the work of the organization.

EMILY SHUMAN – Emily is a teacher of students with visual impairments in Tazwell and Mason counties. She is sighted but has a passion for all things Braille. She is an ISU graduate and has been teaching for 5 years. She and her spouse live out in the country and enjoy the quiet evenings. She joined the board in particular to assist with Educational Programming because not only does she enjoy learning, she loves watching others grow and learn.

STEVE KNECHT – Steve is a retired CAT and is a Certified Public Account, graduating from Illinois State University. He has been married for 36 years and has 3 children and 4 grandchildren. He is a member of St. Philomena Roman Catholic Church. He enjoys family events, outdoor sports and travel and is looking forward to lending his support to the Center and the services it provides to the community.

In Sympathy

Condolences to Gyla Grigsby who lost her older brother, Harry Farson, of Louisiana, in September.

Newsletter Gets a Name!

Wouldn't you know, right in the middle of creating this month's newsletter, a name popped up that seemed fitting: "Around the Center." If you have something you would like to have printed in the newsletter, please let us know by calling 309-637-3693).

DID YOU KNOW – we have a lot of audio books available for you to borrow. There are all sorts of titles, including mysteries, adventure and romance. Please call the center if you would like to borrow any.

CENTER HOURS – we are not yet "open" but we are here and active. If you need anything or just want to chat, please call – the phone number is 309-637-3693. Just remember, if we don't happen to answer LEAVE A MESSAGE so we can call you back!

NEEDED – We have a patron who is in need of a wheelchair. She needs a smallish size and is having trouble finding one. If you know of one that may be available, contact the Center and the information will be passed along. Thanks.

THANK YOU – to Board Members Jennifer Reeder and Emily Shuman who came in and completely sorted and organized the Uftring Technology Center. They identified equipment that was no longer useful so needed to be stored, other items that could be put to good use either here at the Center or for visually impaired students, and a few things that just had to be tossed out. They also found a few items of historical interest, and you will hear more about those in a future "Around the Center" newsletter. It was a lot of work, but many hands made it light, so a huge thank you goes out to Jenn and Emily!

CONGRATULATIONS – to Felisa Durr, who is now focusing on leading fund raising and community outreach efforts for the Center. This is a huge responsibility and she has lots of plans in the works. She will have updates for you after the first of the year.

PLEASE VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

HEY! YOU ARE INVITED!

Whether you have been to any of the previous Zoom events or not you are all especially encouraged to attend this one. Since we can't all be together this holiday, we are having a special Christmas Carol concert, singalong (if you want) fun musical event via Zoom.

A special friend, Kathy Steinheimer, has agreed to share some Christmas music with us, along with some surprise fun. This will take place Wednesday, December 9 at 6:30 PM via Zoom. The link and sign-in information is the same we always use, but here it is again in case you don't have it:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84682308371?pwd=dUx2RzdPSDF6MWdZQ1BxbWI2bTZYQT09>

If you are using a smartphone and do not have Zoom, you will need to download the app.

If you want to use a land line here are the directions:

1. Dial 1-312-626-6799.
2. At the prompt to enter the meeting I.D, press 846 8230 8371 #
3. At the prompt to enter the password, enter 969199

Grab a cup of cocoa, get comfy and get some holiday spirit!

Happy Birthday!

December 2 – Gyla Grigsby
December 4 – James Smith
December 11 – Ashley Edwards
December 15 – Melinda Sell
December 17 – Linda Eddy

Belated Happy Birthday November 13 to Mark Furgenberger

JUST FOR FUN:

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December.

Female reindeer retain their antlers till after they give birth in the spring. Therefore, according to EVERY historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, EVERY single one of them, from Rudolph to Blitzen, had to be a girl. We should have known... ONLY women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night and not get lost.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

It was a cold and misty Christmas morning in the very depth of winter after a heavy fall of snow and only Farmer Evans and the Reverend Joseph Lancaster managed to arrive at the church for the morning service. 'Well,' said the Vicar laconically, 'I guess there's no point in having a service today.' 'Well that's not how I see it.' said Farmer Evans smartly. 'If only one cow turns up at feeding time, I still feed it.'



Free Matter for the Blind & Visually Impaired

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Quote for the Month

"My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that?" – *Bob Hope*