



# AROUND THE CENTER

## CICBVI NEWS – February 2021

2905 W. Garden St., Peoria, IL 61605

Phone: 309-637-3693

Email: [info@cicbvi.org](mailto:info@cicbvi.org)

Website: [www.cicbvi.org](http://www.cicbvi.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/cicbvi](https://www.facebook.com/cicbvi)

Paula Balistreri, Editor

### LOVE IS ALL AROUND US!

Happy February – the month of Valentine’s, Presidential Birthdays, Groundhogs and LOW VISION AWARENESS MONTH!

According to the National Eye Institute, currently about 4.2 million Americans age 40 and older are visually impaired. By 2030, when the very last baby boomers turn 65, the number of Americans who have visual impairments is projected to reach 7.2 million. The leading causes for those age 65 and older include macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, cataracts and glaucoma. For younger people, vision loss is most often caused by trauma, inherited eye conditions or infectious and autoimmune eye diseases.

The good news is there are lots of resources available for people who have low or no vision to help them adjust to their situation. One resource of which you may not be aware is a series of on-line FREE seminars and workshops you may find interesting and helpful. Some of the topics include:

- Using on-line grocery delivery services
- iPhone and iPad Accessibility
- How to stay active and safe at home
- Make your own Valentine Cards
- Compact 10 HD Speech device uses

To see more offerings and register, go to <https://brailleinstitute.org/> and click on the 2021 Braille Challenge Webinar tab.

## **NEWS YOU CAN USE**

As you know, the **Covid-19 vaccine** is being distributed in tiers – and many of you have now become eligible to receive your vaccine. Once you get your appointment, if you need transportation, please call the Center and we will help you out. Remember – if there is no answer, be sure to leave a message!!

**Did you know** you can specify the Central Illinois Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired on your Kroger card and a percentage of your purchases will be donated by Kroger to the Center? If you don't have this option already set up, just visit the customer service counter the next time you are in Kroger. You can also shop using Amazon Smile (check out the link on our web page) and a portion of your purchase will be donated as well. That's like **FREE MONEY** to support our efforts!

**Check out our Facebook page and our Web Page.** You will find lots of information there – and coming soon, there will be videos describing some of the products and assistive devices available to you. Website: [www.cicbvi.org](http://www.cicbvi.org) Facebook: [www.facebook.com/cicbvi](http://www.facebook.com/cicbvi)

**Do you need a new White Cane?** If you are a patron, and it has been over a year, you may be eligible to receive another one. Just contact the Center to make arrangements.

### **COMING SOON!**

The Unity Point Well Mobile is coming to our parking lot! The first date is April 6, with repeat visits the first Tuesday of May, June, August, September and October. Screenings will be offered on a first come, first served basis, from 10:00 AM – noon on those dates. Transportation will be provided for patrons who want to take advantage of this. Stay tuned for more information in the next "Around The Center" newsletter!

## **SPOTLIGHT ON MARK BEAN**

Each month the Spotlight shines on a person connected in some way to the Center. It may be a patron, volunteer, employee or board member. This month the spotlight is on Mark Bean, a member of our Board.

Many of you have at least heard of Mark since he is not only a Board member, he is one of our most active volunteers. In fact, when asked what his hobbies are his answer was “volunteering!” After retiring as a HVAC service technician, Mark has had more time to enjoy this hobby. Outside of the Blind Center, Mark is Moderator of his church (Peoria Heights Congregational), past President of the Peoria Heights Suburban Lions Club, and active with Helping Hands Charitable resale shop.

At the Center, not only is Mark on the Board (where he is chairman of the Facilities Committee) he has been instrumental in getting the entire center painted (inside and out), parking lot and landscaping maintenance completed, HVAC systems updated, security cameras and Ring doorbell installed and, most recently, was the go-between for the Center receiving several pieces of furniture to become a new conversation area in the main room of the Center. As if that isn't enough, Mark is the go-to person when it comes to checking off items on the “Honey-do” list – and that is a true list since Mark reports all the girls in his family have nicknamed him “Honey!”

Outside of his volunteering, Mark has a loving and large family. He is a recent widower but is surrounded by his two grown children, two grandchildren and a multitude of nieces and nephews, including Devin – an energetic nearly 3 year old who keeps Mark on his toes. We are so appreciative of Mark and look forward to many years of his involvement with the Center.

## **ON THE ROAD AGAIN**

You are invited to join us for a trip to Gil's in Hanna City for some good food. The date is February 23<sup>rd</sup> (Tuesday) and our plan is to be at Gil's by 5 PM or so. If you would like to attend, you need to make a reservation by calling the Center BEFORE February 17<sup>th</sup>. If there is no answer, please leave a message that includes your name, phone number, and if you need transportation. If you sign up for transportation, you will be called and given what time to expect the van.

**WHAT:** Gil's Supper Club

**WHEN:** Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>

**COST:** Your meal, beverage, tip

**TRANSPORTATION:** - free (reservation required)

**NOTE:** We will have an area set apart for us and masks will be required while riding in the van and when moving about the restaurant. You will also have your temperature taken prior to getting on the van. If it is not within normal range, you will not be allowed to board.

**THANK YOU to the Peoria Heights Suburban Lions Club** for being the go-between in obtaining a comfy seating arrangement for the Center. As you come in the side door, in the far-right corner, near where the piano was and in front of the speaker, there is now a curved sectional – complete with cup holders and foot rests -for patrons and friends to gather and relax without having to sit on a hard chair at a table. There is a similar grouping in the opposite corner (far left as you come in the side door and near the hall way back to the offices).

**Audio books are available to borrow!** Some sample authors include Tony Hillerman, Janet Evanovich, David Baldacci and Faye Kellerman. Just contact the Center if you would like some sent to you

## Hi! Its Paula B.

Well the shortest month of the year is upon us – and as of February 2<sup>nd</sup> maybe that pesky groundhog won't see his shadow and Spring will be right around the corner. Meanwhile, I hope you will join us at Gil's for a nice meal and some friendly conversation. (details elsewhere in the newsletter)

I know this winter has been hard – we've been cooped up in quarantine, unable to closely visit and hug our loved ones. We've suffered through having friends and family get sick or pass away, we've worried about our country and most of us just want to get back to normal. Of course, that may be a "new normal" and we need to be prepared to handle that. Here at the Center there has been a lot of conversation about preparing for that "new normal" – we want to get back to gathering at the center but, above all, we want our patrons and staff to be safe. To that end, we are being cautious and doing everything we can to be sure we are meeting top safety requirements. So, right now, our goal is Spring. But, understand, the "reopening" may not be exactly what you are used to. It may be that we start with only one lunch and one dinner a month. Tables and seating may be slightly different. You may have to have your temperature taken, wear a mask, use antibacterial hand sanitizer, eat off of paper plates using plastic utensils and food that is individually served. But, rest assured, whatever form it takes, we will do our best to communicate with you and let you know what is going on. Meanwhile, you are encouraged to get your vaccination (and if you need a ride call the Center), wear a mask and wash your hands.

**Did you know that ants rarely get sick? Do you know why? It is because they have tiny little antibodies.**

**WELCOME NEW PATRONS!** Please join in welcoming John Hairston-Bey, Jim Sorrell and Aimee Moser as new Patrons of the Central Illinois Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Aimee lives in Morton, John in Peoria and Jim in Hanna City. Hopefully we will get to meet in person soon at one of our events.

If you know someone who may benefit from our organization and the services we offer, please either share their info with Paula by calling the center, or direct them to our website or Facebook page for contact and sign up information.

## **Happy Birthday!**

February 6 – Matt Stein

February 7 – Ed Lindsay

February 10 – The Styrofoam cooler was invented (1957)

February 12 – Abraham Lincoln

February 14 – Valentine's Day

February 22 – George Washington

February 27 – Lynn Freeman

February 28 – Leona Eppy

The first week of February **CICBVI is the featured organization** at the **Helping Hands Resale Shop in Peoria Heights**. A percentage of sales will be donated to the Center so be sure to shop that week. On Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, Earl, Mark and Paula will be volunteering – so come visit!

**CALENDARS** – We still have a few Braille Calendars available. If you would like one, please call the Center – if you get the answering machine, please be sure to leave a message!

## MISSISSIPPI MUD CAKE

If you have a sweet tooth, you will love this! You will need:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

2 sticks butter or margarine

½ cup cocoa

2 cups sugar

1 tsp. vanilla

Pinch of salt

4 eggs (lightly beaten)

1 ½ cups flour

1 ½ chopped nuts (optional)

Miniature marshmallows

Melt butter and add cocoa. Mix well, then remove from heat. Stir in sugar and beaten eggs. Mix well. Add flour, salt, nuts (if using) and vanilla and mix well. Pour batter into a greased 9"x13" pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 – 45 minutes, careful not to over bake. Remove from oven and immediately sprinkle mini marshmallows over top of cake.

### FROSTING:

1 pound powdered sugar

½ cup milk

1/3 cup cocoa

½ stick softened butter

Over low heat, mix all ingredients until butter is completely melted and mixed in. Pour over warm cake.



## Free Matter for the Blind & Visually Impaired

2905 W Garden St., Peoria, IL 61605  
February 2021 Newsletter

### Quote for the Month

"All you need is love." – The Beatles