



JULY 2019 NEWSLETTER

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From the Executive Director, Felisa Durr

I would like to thank everyone for being so kind and welcoming during my first month on the job. I am excited about bringing new programs and services to the center. I want to offer interesting activities throughout the days and evenings that the center is open that will support our mission. Some of my ideas include a book club (using talking books), bible study, craft corner, independent living studio, business program (see if we can produce and sell items), pottery studio, Spanish classes, exercise program, line dance, technology workshop, and even a golf simulator. I think we can elevate our center to the next level! I would love to get your feedback on these ideas and any other fun activities you can think of. We will have an "Important Suggestion" box in the fellowship hall to capture your ideas and concerns. Let's work together to implement new programs and increase the number of patrons we serve in Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford counties.

Welcome Back Cook, Bob Allen

Yes! Bob is back and cooking up a storm again as our cook. He is glad to be back. You won't want to miss our Open Houses and Jam Sessions to get a dose of Bob's great sense of humor and good food. We're also taking suggestions from patrons for the menu items for future meals and Bob can decide if this is possible.

C.I.C.B.V.I. 12th Annual Golf Outing

The Center's 12th Annual Golf Outing was held on Tuesday, June 4th at Weaver Ridge Golf Course. The morning started with brief rain, but was all cleared and sunny by start time. The 24 teams with 96 golfers played all 18 holes. Afterward, everyone assembled in the main clubhouse for a nice dinner. During the dinner, new Center Executive Director, Felisa Durr, welcomed the group and gave an update on Center programs and services such as braille and white cane classes, and center outings to plays and sports events. She also announced door prizes which were distributed to over 40 participants. The proceeds raised during this event was \$16,945 with a few additional donations still expected. Thank you to our Golf Outing Committee members: Prasad Parupalli, Lanna Scannell, Felisa Durr, Kim Farlin, and Ericka Arreola. Thanks to all our volunteers Lance Barke, Dan Ekstrand, Mark Norris, and Sue Norris, who helped on the day of the event with registration, hole-in-one prize, betting hole, selling mulligans, and the skins game.

A big thank you to all of our sponsors. Gold Sponsors – CGN Global and Randstad Technologies; Bronze Sponsors – Appian and Merrill Lynch. Hole Sponsors – Scott Communications, Tek Systems, East Side Wellness, Mari Halliday, Betty Ekstrand of Hediger & Myers, Shared Blessings. Team Sponsors: CGN Global, Randstad Technologies, Appian, Merrill Lynch, Uftring Auto Group, LORD, Morey Corp, ACC Electronix, Henry Vicary, L&T, Bradley University, The Bogey Men, RLI, Aerotek, Shared Blessings, Whalen Auto, Axis Cades, Render, Harwood, Blind Center Team, Merryl Lynch, Verheyen Family, Parupalli, and Caterpillar Team. Thank you to the individuals and businesses who donated in-kind or monetary gifts.

Go Cardinals Go!

On Thursday, June 6th, the Cardinals won “3 to 1” over the Reds! The Center’s bus was full with eight patrons and four guides. Laughter filled the event from the time we left until our arrival home. A great time was had by all!

Camp Lions Helen Keller

Three patrons attended the Helen Keller camp at Dixon, IL from Sunday, June 16th through 21st. The Center provided patrons transportation to and from the camp.

Onsite Vision Device Store – Open for Business!

We would like to thank our volunteer, Denaya Mullins, for creating an inventory list and organizing our vision device inventory in our two display cabinets. We now have a complete list of all magnifiers, watches, clocks, writing tools, and more. We are now open for business and able to assist patrons via phone or in person with their device inquiries and purchases. Six customers have already been assisted.

Barilla Called!

The Barilla Pasta Company in Chicago has requested our Center collaborate with them to develop new pasta shapes and packaging that can be better utilized by the blind and visually impaired. They are planning a visit to the Center in July to survey our patrons and provide free product to evaluate. We will provide an update as soon as details are finalized.

New Center “Fair Share” Food Pantry Distribution Process

We successfully implemented a new “Fair Share” pantry distribution process for all items received from the Midwest Foodbank.

Donations have been inventoried and each patron is provided, or read, a sheet of items available and the quantities they can receive. Patrons can select what items they want and center volunteers bag up the items for them. At the June 19th and 26th Open House, Center patrons took home two overflowing tote bags of pantry items including pasta, canned vegetables, snacks, sodas, frozen sandwiches, fries, various meats, and a dozen eggs. We have received numerous calls thanking us for the newly implemented process.

Support us on Amazon Smile!

Are you an avid shopper on Amazon.com? If so, then there is a way you can help the Center. If you log on to smile.amazon.com with your regular Amazon login and set up our Center as your preferred non-profit, then the Center will receive a confidential small percentage donation from your purchase. We would like to thank those who have already selected us and we have been receiving notifications of your giving. This is a prime opportunity to encourage continued giving in this simple way. Please help us increase our funding from Amazon Smile.

Paid Drivers Wanted

The Center is looking for reliable and experienced drivers with great driving records who will drive our Center’s minibus or minivan to safely transport our blind and visually impaired patrons to and from programs and events. This is a paid position. If you are qualified and interested, please contact our office to apply.

Ragtime Musical

We will be attending the Tony Award winning musical, "Ragtime," on Thursday, July 18th at the Corn Stock Theatre. This musical depicts the American experience at the turn of the 20th century through three different points of view: that of an upper-class white family, an African American family living in Harlem, and from the perspective of Jewish families living in the lower East side. Tickets must be purchased in advance so please call the Center at (309) 637-3693 to **RSVP by Wednesday, July 3rd.**

Catch Me If You Can at Corn Stock Theater

On August 29th, please plan on joining us as we attend the Cornstock production of "Catch Me If You Can." The story follows Frank Abagnale, Jr., who worked as a doctor, a lawyer, as well as a co-pilot for a major airline, all before his 18th birthday. A master of deception, Abagnale became the most successful bank robber. It was Carl Hanratty's prime mission to capture him and bring him back to justice. A major movie production of this book featured Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hanks. Tickets must be purchased in advance, so please call the Center at (309) 637-3693 to **RSVP by Wednesday, July 31st.**

Center Vehicle Transportation Policy for Volunteers

Non-patrons who ride the Center's minibus or minivan to Center-sponsored events are, by definition, volunteers, so there is no cost to them. They must be sighted, physically capable and willing to provide aid and assistance to all patrons, especially in the cases of emergency, during the processes of loading and unloading the vehicles, and as patrons make their way between vehicles and their seats before and after the event.

Upcoming Events, Meetings, Fundraisers, and Holidays

Wednesday, July 3rd – Open House – Noon

Thursday, July 4th – Holiday – Center Closed

Tuesday, July 9th – Board Meeting – 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 10th – Open House – 5:30 p.m.

Monday, July 15th – Peoria Chiefs Game – 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday, July 17th – Open House - Noon

Thursday, July 18th – Ragtime Musical – 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 20th – Jam Session – 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Wednesday, July 24th – Open House – 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 31st – Open House – Noon

Sunday, August 25th – Tim Hawkins Comedy Show – 7:00 p.m.

Meal Menus for July

July 3rd – Open House – Noon – Brats with chili or sauerkraut, potato salad, coleslaw, baked beans, ice cream sandwich

July 10th – Open House – 5:30 p.m. – Fried chicken, green beans, mashed potatoes/gravy, fruit salad, biscuits, pie.

July 17th – Open House – Noon – Tuna salad, pasta salad, fruit salad, rolls, cookies, sherbet

July 20th – Jam Session – 1 p.m. – Brunch – scrambled eggs or omelette, lil' smokie sausages, tater tots, biscuits, gravy, fruit

July 24th – Open House – 5:30 p.m. – Meatloaf, macaroni and cheese, green beans, dessert

July 31st – Open House – Noon – Bacon cheeseburgers, fries, pineapple with cottage cheese, jello

Bingo and other games will be played at all Open Houses.

Reservations for patrons, volunteers, and guests need to be called in no later than noon on the day before the Open House.

Reservations for Jam Session need to be called in no later than noon on Thursday before the Jam Session.

Donations – Monetary and Other

We would also like to thank the following for their donations:

Monetary Donations: Morton Lions Club \$800, Trinity Presbyterian Church \$200, Sue and Mark Norris \$100, Mary Turner \$20, Ron Selby \$20, Jerome Caldwell \$15.

Memorial Donations:

Bob and Martha Smith Memorial: Post E Illinois Division TPA \$100, LeVonne Haas Memorial: Steve & Lori Jarvill \$40, Jo Lynn Carver & T. Sombeck Family \$50.00, Kenneth & Susan Schwab \$50

In Kind Donations: Tom Vogel – bingo food prizes, Mike Waldron – food service items.

We send our condolences to the family of LeVonne Haas, who passed away May 24, 2019.



Free Matter for the Blind & Visually Impaired

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July 2019 Newsletter

Quote for the Month – “Each time you reach a new level, that new level demands a better you.” By Felisa Durr