



AROUND THE CENTER

CICBVI NEWS DECEMBER, 2022

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Paula Balistreri, Editor

CHRISTMAS CHEER

While the holidays are a particularly busy time of year, the CICBVI has been busy ALL year – possibly even record breaking in the amount of services provided and the level of community presence. Here is a recap – and it doesn't even include what we will accomplish in December:

First, we have had contact with and directly provided individual services and/or referrals for services to over 200 blind or visually impaired people! This included everything from helping to set up or train on assistive devices, assistance with orientation and/or mobility for newly visually impaired individuals and their caregivers, to referrals to other social service agencies and resources for devices or assistance. Adding on to this, we have nearly doubled our official list of patrons since 2021 and tripled our newsletter recipient list.

We have held 32 one-on-one training sessions and/or home visits. Generally, this involves setting up assistive devices - anything from an Alexa to a reader/magnifier to helping with smart phones. While most of these are people who live in the area, we have had people come to the center from as far away as Champaign, Kewanee and Roanoke and taken phone calls from across the country. Most of these are a result of social media or word-of-mouth about our Center.

Our drivers (bless them!) have personally delivered 236 food baskets. Our partnership with Midwest Food Bank and donations from

individuals or organizations such as the 1st Baptist Church in Peoria, along with the addition of fresh items from the CICBVI have allowed us to make the baskets contain not only fun treats but nutritious food and beverages.

Our partnership with the Rockford Sight and Hearing Center has allowed us to host informational events showcasing the latest technology specifically for the visually impaired plus three Long White Cane clinics. We have given away 18 long white canes and have several more clinics planned for 2023, including an advanced class and more about the WeWalk smart cane.

We have reason to be extra blessed this year due to support from long-time corporate partners IL Eye Center and Uftring Auto Group plus have begun new relationships with several other companies that have supported our efforts this year and have been listed as Gold, Silver, Bronze or Copper sponsors at our fundraising events. We have also developed relationships with several service organizations such as Impact Central Illinois and the North Peoria Rotary Club. And, of course, we are happy to continue our partnership with area Lions Clubs. Along with the Rotary Club and Impact, Illinois, we have given presentations to organizations such as Advocates for Access and the Peoria Academy. The CICBVI has been a bigger presence in the media this year, too. We've received several "tags" on social media, we were featured on both WEEK-TV and WMBD-TV plus radio stations WSWT Mix 106.9 and WCBU 89.9 and are looking forward to sharing our story even more in 2023.

No recap would be complete without talking about our patron social events. This year, so far, we have held 32 events and field trips for our patrons. We have visited the Peoria Zoo, the Wheels O' Time museum, multiple restaurants and more. Our events have featured

everything from haircuts to Elvis to visits from pets. We have banged on drums, played games, shared our “favorites” and worn funny hats.

And, of course, this doesn't include the ongoing administrative work that is required to keep our Center up and running – making sure our vehicles are serviced, our facility is safe, our fund raising and community events are successful and more. NONE of this could be accomplished without support from individuals, groups and volunteers, our Board of Directors and our Staff.

In just a few short weeks we will be in the New Year and we aren't slowing down! Next month you will hear more exciting news about what to expect (hint: kitchen update and technology for a start).

Thank you and may all the joys of season be yours to experience.
Peace and love, - Paula B

BRAILLE CALENDARS AVAILABLE

We have 2023 calendars in Braille if you would like to have one – just call the center at 309-637-3693 and we will get one to you.

THE WHEELS ON THE BUS GO 'ROUND AND 'ROUND

We are fortunate to have two vehicles for transporting patrons to our events and field trips. This year we have had a few maintenance issues and are sorry for any inconvenience. However, your safety comes first so they must be addressed. On the other hand, we had fun riding the bus in the St. Patrick's Day parade and showing off our new decals highlighting that we are the home of the original long white cane.

DECEMBER EVENTS

New this year is a trip to Northwoods Community Church to see their Christmas extravaganza. This is a musical sharing the Christmas story and includes amazing performances and music. Tickets are limited so this is a first come/first served event. The program is December 16th (a Friday) at 7:00 PM and reservations MUST be in NO LATER than December 9th. You can make your reservations (or if you have questions) by calling the Center at 309-637-3693. This is a free event, but again, tickets are limited.

We will be going out for a Christmas lunch on December 21st to the Bartonville Family Restaurant. If you would like to attend, please be sure to get your reservation in no later than December 15th.

We will be doing “Bingo for Breakfast” again this month on December 29th (a Thursday) at 9:00 AM. Be sure to get your reservations in no later than December 26th!

NEED A GIFT IDEA?

We are still fundraising through TERRILYNN NUTS AND SWEETS

Feeling a little nutty? Or sweet? Shop this TerriLynn link for some goodies and benefit CICBVI at the same time.
<https://www.cicbvi.terri Lynn.com>.

If you haven't done so yet, now is a good time to register your Kroger card and have a percentage of your shopping spend donated to the CICBVI. This does NOT affect your fuel points nor does it cost you anything. You just indicate you would like Kroger to give to the CICBVI and every time you shop a percentage of what you spend comes our way. Easy – peasy and MUCH appreciated! Just visit the Kroger web site and register. If you need help, call the Center and we will help you!

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- December 1 Happy Birthday to BINGO – invented in 1929
Happy Birthday to Ar'Mand Erving
- December 2 Happy Birthday to Gyla Grigsby
- December 11 Happy Birthday to Linda Eddy
- December 12 On this date in 1899 the golf tee was invented
- December 13 Happy Birthday Ron Selby
CICBVI Board Meeting at IL Eye Center
- December 14 Midwest Food Bank food pick-up
- December 15-16 Food Baskets delivered
- December 15 Happy Birthday Melinda Sell
- December 16 7:00 PM Northwoods Christmas program –
reservations due no later than December 9th and tickets are limited
- December 17 Happy Birthday Ashley Edwards
In 1791 the first one way street was created
- December 19 In 1985, the first “I’ve fallen and I can’t get up”
commercial was broadcast
- December 21 First Day of Winter (and the shortest day of the year)
Lunch at the Bartonville Family Diner – reservations
due no later than December 15th
- December 24 Christmas Eve – all through the house no creature
is stirring, not even a mouse
- December 25 MERRY CHRISTMAS
- December 26 Happy Birthday Keith Neilson
HAPPY KWANZAA
- December 29 Bingo for Breakfast at the Center – reservations due
December 26th
- December 30 Happy Birthday Bill Harrell

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK

And hands that help are the best!

Twice a year, sales at the Helping Hands Thrift Store in Peoria Heights benefit the CICBVI and our turn is coming up the week of December 7 – 12. You can help, too by donating your gently used items to the store (just go during regular business hours and drop them off) and SHOPPING! If you visit their Facebook page, you will get a preview of many of the cool things they have for sale – toys, books, games, kitchen items, vintage treasures and more!

Please take a few minutes to stop by

Helping Hands

1003 E. War Memorial Drive, Peoria Heights

And while you're there – tell them CICBVI sent you and say hi to store manager Toni!

THANK YOU!



**Free Matter for the Blind &
Visually Impaired**

2905 W Garden St., Peoria, IL 61605
December, 2022 Newsletter

Quote for the Month

“Each day comes bearing its gifts. Untie the ribbon.”
-Ann Ruth Schabacker