



AROUND THE CENTER

CICBVI NEWS January, 2023

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Paula Balistreri, Editor

NEW YEAR NEWS!

The earth has taken another trip around the sun and the CICBVI has had an adventurous year! It has been exciting to say the least!

We have experienced tremendous growth – and while I haven't been here forever, I am pretty sure we have done more this year than we have in, perhaps, decades! We have significantly increased (nearly doubled!) the number of patrons we serve, our list of friends and supporters has almost tripled and we have added to the services we offer. We have had more White Cane training and technology classes than ever before and attendance at social events has seen a phenomenal increase (more on this later)! We are becoming more well known in the community thanks to our story being shared on radio, television and in print media (to say nothing of our increased presence on social media). In short, we are on a roll with no plans to slow down now!

So, what are we looking forward to? Plans are in the works to continue to increase our technology offerings. Thanks to a grant from Central IL Impact, we will be updating our tech room. We have purchased assistive devices such as a WeWalk cane with GPS capability and have a program in place to loan them out. We will continue to work with other community resources to improve our outreach and already have been “planning ahead” for an exciting New Year. Hop on the CICBVI train and enjoy the ride! -Paula B

Some Problems are Good Problems!

This year has seen such an increase that we are finding ourselves in a position where our bus and van are full for certain events. This is a good problem to have since it means not only are we reaching more people who need and appreciate our services, we are seeing more and more people actively participating. This is a bad problem because we don't want to have to deny services simply because a patron can't get to us. This is where we need your help.

We would like to be able to build a roster of volunteers who are willing to provide transportation to our events and/or field trips for select patrons. If we get enough kind souls to help us, it would be a small commitment – in fact, the commitment level would be entirely up to you! We just need to have a list of people that we can invite to share in our activities and provide a ride. As a volunteer you would use your own vehicle to pick up a patron, bring them to the location (either the CICBVI center or to the field trip location) and get them back home afterwards. You would be invited to share in the event – meal and/or tickets when applicable would be provided as a token of our appreciation. Does this sound like something you would like to do? If so, please contact the CICBVI at 309-637-3693 or e-mail at info@cicbvi.org. Your heart will feel good and so will ours!

REMINDER: It is winter – cold, snowy, icy with an increase in the risk for a fall. One way you can help keep yourself safe is to WALK LIKE A PENGUIN! Yes, it may look a little funny, but carefully placing your feet, keeping your arms and hands free and slightly out from your body and doing that penguin waddle has been shown to be a safer way to walk on the ice and snow!

WHITE CANE TRAINING DAY SCHEDULED

Once, again we will be offering a basic white cane training class AND providing patrons who need one with a free long white cane. The class is scheduled for February 7th at 11:00 AM here at the Center. This is a basic class, particularly designed for those who have never used a long white cane before but experienced users are welcome, too. Caregivers and/or family members are encouraged to attend as well.

The class is taught by Sean Johnson, who is a vision rehabilitation specialist from the Rockford Center for Sight and Hearing. Not only will he demonstrate the proper way to use a long white cane, he will provide all sorts of “insider” tips to make your mobility safer and easier.

Again, the class and cane are free but you must pre-register. You can do so by calling the CICBVI at 309-637-3693 or e-mailing info@cicbvi.org. Canes are custom fit so users will be asked to provide measurements so we can be sure to have the proper size available. Users measure from the armpit to the floor in inches, please.

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.

WATCH YOUR MAILBOX – February is Vision Awareness Month and we will be sending out a very special letter near the first of that month. Be sure to watch your mail for it!

IF YOU MISSED IT LAST MONTH –

We had a wonderful experience at the Northwoods Church Christmas Program (in spite of it being bitter cold), lunch at the Bartonville Family Diner where everyone participated in a Christmas Kindness and Bingo for Breakfast at the center to wrap up 2022. Hope to see you at our upcoming events!

SOUP and STORIES LUNCH

January's event will be lunch at the center featuring warm and cozy soup and some story telling! Come hear about some adventures, share some laughs and enjoy an afternoon with your friends at the Center. The date is January 25th, and lunch will be served at noon, but plan to arrive around 11:45 AM to get situated. Cost is \$5.00 per person. Please be sure to call in your reservation no later than January 20th. Remember, our transportation services get filled up fast and spots will be reserved on a first come, first served basis. Hope to see you there!

STAFF CHANGES

In case you haven't heard, Felisa Durr has resigned from the CICBVI. She has accepted a position as IT Program Manager with the Minority Business Development Center in Peoria. Everyone at the CICBVI wishes her all the best as she embarks in this new chapter.

FOOD BASKET REMINDER: If you get a food basket, please remember to be available for delivery. Our drivers call you the day before AND the day of so be sure to answer your phone. If not, you may be skipped that month. Want to get on the list? Call the CICBVI and sign up – its free!

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

January 1	Happy New Year!
January 4	Happy Birthday to Louis Braille who invented the raised alphabet for the blind
January 5	Happy Birthday Tom Vogel, Paul White and Becky Williams
January 10	CICBVI Board Meeting at IL Eye Center
January 11	Happy Birthday Dennis Jurewicz and Alexander Hamilton
January 11	Midwest Food Bank pick up
January 12 – 13	Food Basket deliveries
January 13	Happy Birthday Dean Eric Collins
January 16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 18	Happy Birthday Alice Lopez
January 19	Tin Cans were invented on this date in 1825
January 20	Happy Birthday Dale Anderson
January 21	National Hug Day
January 23	Happy Birthday Allison Puetz
January 24	The first beer was sold in a can in 1935
January 25	Soup and Stories Lunch – be sure to call in your reservation right away!
January 27	Happy Birthday Otto Johann
January 29	Happy Birthday Carol Klokkenga
January 30	Happy Birthday Kurt Vannaken

Did you know – January is National Soup Month, National Blood Donor Month (go roll up a sleeve!) and National Oatmeal Month!

Central Illinois Center
for the **Blind**
& **Visually**
Impaired



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

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Quote for the Month

“New year—a new chapter, new verse, or just the same old story? Ultimately, we write it. The choice is ours.”

ALEX MORRITT