

NEWS & VIEWS

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Fall/Winter 2009



Center for the Blind
and Visually Impaired

Serving the Delaware Valley

A “Mission-Minded” Agency Moving Forward – CBVI’s Agency Update –

by: David A. Stitely
President of the CBVI Board

It’s a busy time of year. Schools are back in full swing, boards and clubs have packed agendas, and the holiday frenzy has begun. There is an energy to this time of year that I enjoy. I am particularly aware of this energy at CBVI. The initial reading of Keystone Blind Association’s affiliation with CBVI is positive. The collaboration has generated fresh ideas and given CBVI a new sense of enthusiasm about what we do as we venture forth on new fronts.

CBVI, with KBA, is especially excited about the possibility of bringing new work opportunities to the Delaware Co. area for local blind and visually impaired individuals. Although still in the investigational stage, prospects are promising and we are confident that jobs will be on the horizon.



Kassandra Hernandez (L) and Ariel Gaither examine a beehive during an IDEAL program lecture at CBVI.

children and young adults, ages 8 through 21. This novel program will include an educational and fun-filled trip to Florida to participate in the Disney Youth Education

Series in the summer of 2010 as a joint venture with KBA. Look for more about Keystone Kids’ Disney trip in the next *News and Views*!

CBVI has always been about making independence a reality for blind or visually impaired individuals. This summer, we continued this tradition as eleven blind and visually impaired school students took their first steps towards independence and participated in CBVI’s residential summer transition program, IDEAL. You can read more about this program on page 6.

About 20 people per day participate in CBVI’s Life Skills Education classes. Ceramics, health & fitness, gardening, and lectures by guest speakers keep members active and informed.

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On the road again!
Louise Massie (L) and Ethel Keegan on the way to a Life Skills Education class in the CBVI van.

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After intensive training and testing, Denise Sutton, Marva Terry, and Lori Johnson were certified by the PA Association for the Blind (PAB) as Specialized Service Life Skills Aides.

As such, they will assist clients in the In-Home and Specialized Service programs under the direction of Connie Williams. The new aides will work on gathering intake information and will assist clients with reading mail, shopping, banking, and medical appointments.

Congratulations, ladies!



L-R: Connie Williams, Denise Sutton, Marva Terry & Lori Johnson.

Ask Dr. Jerry

I recently developed a painful sty. What is a sty? What causes a sty and how should it be treated?

A sty is a small bump that can appear on the outside or inside of the eyelid. A sty develops from an eyelash follicle or an eyelid oil gland that becomes clogged from excess oil, debris or bacteria. Sharing make-up or applying too much eye makeup can sometimes cause styes to develop. Styes also seem to be brought on by increased stress. Although the appearance of a sty can be unsightly at times, it is usually harmless.

Patients with styes often complain of watery eyes, pain, tenderness, itching, or redness around the sty. Styes usually appear as a reddish bump on the eyelid. When a sty first develops, the eye may feel bruised and may feel sensitive to light.

Treat a sty with warm compresses. Gently press a very warm washcloth against the eyelid for 5 minutes at least 4 times per day. If the area becomes infected, antibiotic ointments or eye drops may help cure the infection. In some cases antibiotic pills may be needed.

If a sty does not go away within a week with the application of warm compresses, see your eye doctor. Do not wear eye make-up or contact lenses until a sty heals, to prevent the possibility of infection. ■



CBVI's Agency Update *(continued from pg. 1)*

Our Specialized Service and In-Home Rehabilitation numbers continue to increase. CBVI provides transportation, escort services, shopping assistance, mail reading support and chore services throughout Delaware County. Thanks to these services, many blind and visually impaired residents are able to continue to live self-sufficiently in their homes.

CBVI's Computer Access Technology training program is growing in ways we had not predicted. An affiliation with our local Veteran's Administration has contributed to this increase. CBVI is proud to be the area's premier provider of computer instruction for those with vision loss.

It's a good feeling, knowing that CBVI is addressing its mission of service to the blind and visually impaired, both by continuing traditional quality programs and by looking towards expanding these services in the near future.

Realizing that few of us have escaped the effects of these difficult economic times, I would be remiss not to **thank our loyal donors and your commitment to our mission. Because of you, independence for blind and visually impaired individuals in our community can become a reality.** ■



Jeane Leuger and Ryan Loftus are students in CBVI's Computer Access Technology (CAT) program.

A Super Cycling Sunday!

Seventh Annual Bike-4-Sight Event

Cyclists from around the tri-state area and beyond biked along the scenic roads of Delaware, Chester and New Castle counties on Sunday, June 14th for the 7th annual Bike-4-Sight fundraiser to benefit the Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The event included rides for all levels, from beginners to accomplished cyclists; there were 2, 13, 25, 50 and 62 mile tours.



Pumped after completing the 62 mile Metric Century route are (from left) Dave Billenzini, Glenn Smith, Julien Wallace, Stu Smith, Michael Clark, Peter Schmidt, Philip Aiken, and Jeremy Leipzig.

NBC 10 news anchor Jamison Uhler, a Media, PA native son, launched the longest rides which also toured the grounds of Winterthur Museum and Country Estate. Harry Havnoonian, owner of Cycle Sport in Media, chaired the event and shared major sponsorship with Crozer-Chester Medical Center. "A great time and a great ride for a great cause" was the consensus of the day! ■



Four members of the Rebels Cycling Team (from left) Nancy Ritter, Diane Federici, Alex Renninger and Arlene Douge are ready to ride!



Bike-4-Sight Chairman Harry Havnoonian, owner of Cycle Sport in Media, congratulated Ellen Evans on her return from the 50 mile ride.



CBVI CEO Jonathan Fister (center) greets the Shuffler family, Brian, Christine, Alexandra, Olivia and Brady – all participants in Bike-4-Sight!

Did you Miss



2009?

Be part of the fun at our 2010 fundraiser on Sunday, June 20th.

Details will follow in our upcoming newsletter and on our website at www.bike4sight.cbvi.net.

Thank You

Bike-4-Sight 2009 Major Sponsors!

Crozer-Keystone Health System

Cycle Sport

Giant • Schwinn • Specialized

Iron Hill Brewery & Restaurant

Dunkin Donuts • Starbucks Coffee

The Dale-Reese Foundation

Keystone Blind Assoc. • Trader Joe's

Shop Sight Solutions for the Holidays!

**Pre-holiday Sale
Now in Progress!**

Sight Solutions offers the area's largest selection of magnifiers, household items, recreational products, lighting and technical devices designed to make life easier for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.



**For store hours
or to schedule an
appointment,
Call
610-874-1476
ext. 120**

Life Skills Group Boasts Award-Winning Garden



Lavonne McCommons picks cherry tomatoes assisted by fellow group member, John Gordy.

Visitors to CBVI couldn't help but notice the beautiful garden growing along the side of the building. The garden, planted and tended by the Life Skills Group under direction of volunteers from the Delaware County Master Gardeners, received special recognition this fall. It was awarded 1st Place in the Community Garden division of the Master Gardener's 20th Annual Garden Contest!

According to Master Gardener, Hope Jones-Gary, judges were impressed by the design of the garden and by its seasonal changes. In the spring, the garden was a burst of color with hosts of daffodils, hyacinths and tulips. Come summer, colorful perennials sprouted amidst food crops and herbs. Tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, mint, and basil emerged in abundance! Judges especially liked the use of fragrant plantings and things that were particularly tactile, ranging from soft to scratchy. The involvement of smell and touch made the garden more than just a visual experience and enhanced the enjoyment of the clients in the Life Skills Group.

"It was wonderful to work with this group," stated Jones-Gary. "The award was a surprise to us all. I'm so happy for them!" Group members were also thrilled with the recognition and have enjoyed the garden's bounty. "I had peppers and eggs on Sunday, compliments of the garden!" said eighty-three year-old Margaret LeQuire with a big smile. Find out more about the Master Gardener's Program at CBVI by calling 610-874-1476 ext.161. ■

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*Warmest Wishes
for a
Wonderful
Holiday Season
and a
Healthy, Prosperous
New Year!*



CBVI's Holiday Wish List

For our transportation Department:

*Good quality used car.
(preferably sedan or minivan)*

For our CAT program:

*4 network-ready
computer printers*

*4 flat panel computer
monitors, 19" or over*

For our IDEAL Summer Program:

Large screen TV

Gas BBQ grill

If you would like to help
make our "wishes" come true,
please call 610-874-1476 ext.161

Main Line Art Center Outreach Exhibit Showcases CBVI Artists

The Outreach Exhibit at the Main Line Art Center (MLAC) recently featured ceramic pieces created by the clients in the Life Skills Education Group at CBVI. *Creating in Clay* is MLAC's outreach program that provides weekly ceramics classes at CBVI.

Each Monday, teachers from MLAC direct the group in the tactile creation of beautiful pottery and sculptures. Clients look forward to the sessions where hidden talents are set free, generating feelings of pride and satisfaction. Group member, eighty-two year old Joe Goughan, tries to never miss a class and explains, "This program helps me to use my hands in ways I thought were no longer possible. It makes me feel proud to bring a creation home and get compliments on it. My family makes a fuss even if it's a little lopsided!"

Creating in Clay is made possible by generous grants from Harriet G. Fredericks Trust, The Huston Foundation and The Karen and Herbert Lotman Foundation.

For information about *Creating in Clay* or about the Life Skills Education Group please call 610-874-1476 ext.161. ■



Judy Herman (R) Executive Director of Main Line Art Center admires the work of CBVI artist, Virginia Boyd.

Verizon Grant Supports CBVI's "IDEAL" Program

The "IDEAL" program helps blind and visually impaired teens transition into the world beyond high school



Darrell carefully fills a pot with water, gingerly carries it to the stove and gently places two eggs into the pot. His fingers explore the raised dots around the dials in front of the stove and he makes his selection. He places his hand a foot or so above the burners to feel the rush of heat. "I like hard-boiled eggs in my tuna salad," Darrell explains. Using his senses – touch, smell, and hearing – Darrell, who is totally blind, is off to a good start to a tasty lunch.

Along with ten other students, Darrell was a student this summer in the IDEAL (Individual Development through Experience, Assessment and Learning) transition program held at the Center. This year Verizon through its Check Into Literacy Program issued a grant for \$5,000 in support of the program.



IDEAL is a four week residential program devised to help blind and visually impaired high school students, ages 15 through 21, to transition into college or the work world. The curriculum is specially designed to develop skills for independence. Mobility lessons offer instruction in the use of the white cane, orientation to sidewalks and street crossings and access to public transportation. The Home Management program emphasizes all the skills necessary for independent living: cooking, doing laundry, cleaning, bill paying, banking, etc. Computer classes introduce students to the latest and best assistive technology for use in the classroom or the workplace. Students also receive vocational guidance, hone their Braille and keyboarding skills, and work with academic remediation in math and language arts. Students attend full days of classes but enjoy social activities such as dining out and mall trips in the evening and field trips to amusement parks and cultural events on the weekends.



This social aspect of IDEAL is important to students like Joe Ohlert who is visually impaired due to a condition called Retinitis Pigmentosa. "I really appreciated meeting kids who have the same eye condition that I have," said Joe. "It was good to actually have time to sit and talk to someone my own age about RP issues. I never had that before." Fellow student, Luke Walsh, concurred, "I just enjoyed being with other kids – we laughed a lot!"

For more information about the IDEAL program, please call 610-874-1476 ext.161. ■

United Way's "Day of Caring" Benefits Agency

Hats off to the wonderful employees of Kimberly-Clark Corp. for the help they provided to CBVI through United Way's "Day of Caring."

Thanks to this team of seven dedicated & skilled workers, the CBVI lobby is painted a cheery shade of blue. Haley Paint donated the paint for this project. The tile floors in common areas are sparkling and outside garden areas have been manicured. The team also made sure that the CBVI dormitory area was in tip-top shape for the arrival of high school students in the IDEAL program.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all who were involved in this very



Kimberly-Clark volunteers (L-R): Ruth Malloy, Erin Lennon and Patty Langdon. The team also included Fuzzie Emmens, Dachuan Du, Linda Kirby and Joe Segich, not pictured.

productive "Day of Caring", especially Mary Keyes Kain of United Way. On behalf of CBVI and the blind and visually impaired people that we serve, we offer a special thanks to our friends at Kimberly-Clark and United Way. ■

Tools For Sale

CBVI now carries a complete line of tools by **KEY Enterprises** (a subsidiary of Keystone Blind Association.) These professional grade tools include shovels, scoops, forks, hoes, specialty tools and wheelbarrows. KEY's tools are competitively priced.

Don't get "blown away" by all of those fall leaves that need raking up or left "out in the cold" without a snow shovel this winter. Stop in at the Center today and take a look at these impressive items, perfect for that job around your home or business. ■



Thank You For Your Generosity

CBVI graciously acknowledges the following for supporting our mission:

Brandywine Health • The Dale-Reese Foundation
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Dr. Lauren Katz – Alladin CCTV and low vision items
Middletown Library – books on tape & large print books
Haley Paint – paint for agency lobby

Thanks for Major Gifts:

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News & Views is the official publication of the **Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI)**. CBVI is a not-for-profit agency dedicated to helping individuals prevent, prepare for, and adapt to vision loss in order to achieve independence.

This Made Our Day!

Ed Campitelli of Glen Mills, PA recently shared the following with CBVI:

“I saw the name of your agency today and it brought back good memories. My mom, Claire, has macular degeneration and received services from your agency. Of all the agencies that we dealt with in caring for my mom, the people from CBVI were the nicest, most informed and most compassionate. You guys were super!

Although my mom is in an assisted-living facility now, the help she received from CBVI made it possible for her to stay in her home for over a year. Thanks for all you did for my mom.”

For information on CBVI’s Rehabilitation or Specialized Services Programs, please call 610-874-1476 ext.161. ■

United Way News

CBVI is proud of our affiliation with the United Way of Southeast Delaware County. Every dollar we receive from the United Way goes to services we provide to help blind and visually impaired people remain independent.

At a special United Way Awards Dinner held on June 24th, CBVI was recognized as a “gold award” agency for “outstanding service to the people of our community.”

If you would like your donation to United Way to be directed to CBVI, please specify our name and number on your United Way Pledge Card:

Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired

UW of SE Delaware Co Code: **M180**

UW of SE PA Code: **00347**

Remember, together we live “United.”