

“IT’S A TERRIBLE
THING TO SEE
AND HAVE
NO VISION.”

HELEN KELLER

INSIDE

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Executive Director

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A Thrift Boutique

In September the doors opened to **re-visions**, a Thrift Boutique, located at 15 E. Third Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015. Formerly the Second Sight Thrift Shop located in the Trolley Station Mall, the agency’s retail space now has a new name, a new look and a new location in the heart of Southside Bethlehem’s lively Third Street shopping district.

Manager David Ference and his staff have been excited to welcome shoppers with a wonderful selection of new and gently used men’s and women’s fashions. The boutique is also an outlet for low vision aids such as large print check registers, talking watches, and many other items to enhance vision. The shop continues to be part of PA WORKWEAR, a program which helps outfit people going back to the workforce.

Shopping hours have been expanded to include Wednesday and Thursday, 10 am-6 pm; Friday, 10 am-8 pm; Saturday, 10 am-6 pm and Sunday,

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OUR MISSION

To provide a comprehensive set of preventative, rehabilitative, support and social services enabling blind and visually impaired clients to achieve their personal goals and restore quality of life consistent with those goals. Programs will provide a balance of independent living skills and social services to meet individual needs across a diverse client base and also help reduce the incidence of vision loss in the community through prevention of blindness and remedial eye care services.

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12 noon-5 pm. Parking is available on the street in front of the boutique, as well as in the lot directly across the street.

The Grand Opening was celebrated on Friday, September 3, 2010, as **re-visions** joined in the celebration of First Friday Bethlehem. Mary Ann Alexander, the Center for Vision Loss's new Manager of Innovative Programs, shared her musical talents throughout the evening. And the walls of the shop offered a visual treat with the photographic art of Dr. Amit Gupta, a retina specialist from the Lehigh Valley and Stroudsburg.

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VISION is published four times a year by the Center for Vision Loss for our clients, donors, volunteers and friends in the community.

Stephanie Olexa, Ph.D., Executive Director

Karen Z. Huetter, Editor

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The boutique will continue to be part of all First Friday celebrations so mark your calendar for more shopping and fun. Remember to keep re-visions on your shopping radar. There are many more surprises in store for the future! And, of course, proceeds from the boutique continue to help support the programs and services of the Center for Vision Loss. For more information call **610.625.4700**.

IN HER WORDS...

It's September! For me this month signifies the start of a new year of learning coupled with a time to reflect on the past year. As the Center for Vision Loss ended its first fiscal year, there were many notable changes. We brought together the teams from two organizations to develop a unified approach to serve our clients. We moved the Bethlehem staff to our Allentown facility to nurture continued collaboration. We also said thank you and goodbye to Donna Shurilla, Program Director, who retired after 28 years with the agency.

Now more exciting changes are still to come! We moved our thrift shop from the Trolley Station Mall to South Bethlehem's vibrant Third Street where we will be highlighting a full line of low vision aids, as well as clothing and accessories.

We are welcoming our new Director of Vision Services, Doug Yingling, who has over 25 years of experience working in agencies that serve the blind and visually impaired. Most recently Doug was the Chief Operating Officer for the Montgomery County Association for the Blind.

We also welcome Mary Ann Alexander as our new Manager of Innovative Programs. Mary Ann has held positions of responsibility in business, has a strong background in programs and has served as a past president of the Monroe County Council of the Blind. She believes that life should be enjoyed,

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not simply lived, and she is determined to introduce new and innovative ideas for our agency. In particular Mary Ann will help us expand our volunteer program.

Finally, we have expanded our training programs to include seminars and training sessions for a wide variety of industries. And our community outreach is continuing to forge links with other agencies and programs so we can enhance our services through collaboration with others.

As we move forward in fiscal year 2010-2011, the challenges and opportunities are huge. I'm looking forward to the journey with all of you.



Stephanie Olexa, Ph.D.

Executive Director



NEW CENTER FOR VISION LOSS WEBSITE LAUNCHED

If you haven't yet taken the time to surf the net and check out our new website, you really should! You'll find information about our programs and services while the "News and Events" page will keep you informed about agency happenings. The "Community Outreach" page features articles about eye care and eye safety, while kids can click on "Dr. Optical's Activity Page" each month and have some printable fun. Our website at www.centerforvisionloss.org is a collaboration of Marty Desilets, Element Media, and Robb Piotrowski, Inova Technologies.

SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS

In late August, one of the Center for Vision Loss's volunteer drivers announced her retirement. While a retirement is not that unusual, Alma Spayd's announcement ended 59 years of service to our clients!

Yes, Alma is 93 years old and she began driving for the agency in 1951. Her daughter May, now 72 and an agency client, had contracted pneumonia when she was 8 weeks old. May was treated with too much oxygen which affected her optic nerves and she became blind. Alma was devastated. When the little girl got older, a representative of the Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired in Lehigh County suggested that the Spayds bring May to the office for activities. That's when Alma started driving clients to appointments and events on nights and weekends while she continued to work full time during the day as a sewing machine operator. Over the years, Alma drove clients to Beacon Lodge and trips to the shore, made sandwiches as a fundraiser and for 30 years hosted an annual picnic at her home for the clients.

Alma reported that she feels good about what she did and that she helped people who needed help. Of course, the Center for Vision Loss is so appreciative of her services, and that is the perfect segue into the agency's call for more volunteers.

Mary Ann Alexander, Manager of Innovative Programs, includes volunteer recruitment in her duties. Currently, she reports that she is looking for volunteers in the following areas:

- *Escorted Transportation Drivers* – drive clients to essential appointments
- *Vision Screeners* – screen children and adults for vision problems
- **re-visions Sales Associates** – help with sales and organization of the thrift boutique
- *Annie's Angels* – provide companionship to a client

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DID YOU KNOW?

OCTOBER IS “WHITE CANE MONTH”

October is officially “White Cane Month” in Pennsylvania. This special designation was made to promote public awareness for people using canes in an effort to help them travel safely. The red and white markings on a cane for the blind are universal. However, White Cane Month also promotes safety for those using support canes and guide dogs. White Cane law states, in part, that the driver of a vehicle must yield the right of way to a pedestrian using a mobility device. The law is also tied to the Public Accommodation Law which states that any owner of a business who refuses to permit entry or accommodation to a person using a white cane or a guide dog is guilty of a misdemeanor.

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Mary Ann is especially excited about Annie’s Angels, the newest Center for Vision Loss volunteer opportunity. Annie’s Angels is named for Anne Sullivan, the long-time companion to Helen Keller. Volunteers will become a companion to a client and help in various ways such as reading mail, providing encouragement, providing conversation, or going shopping or to lunch together.

To find out more about these volunteer opportunities, contact Mary Ann at **610.433.6018, x. 232** or **maryann.alexander@centerforvisionloss.org**. Or check out the volunteer opportunities listed on our website at **www.centerforvisionloss.org**. You will be glad that you did!

SPEAKER’S BUREAU

If you are interested in having a representative from the Center for Vision Loss speak to your club, church group, activity group, business meeting or other gathering, call Doug Yingling, Director of Vision Services, at **610.433.6018, x. 223**. We love to take our show on the road!

FOCUS ON CLIENT NEWS

LARGE PRINT CALENDARS FOR SALE

It's time to purchase your large-print calendars for 2011! Center for Vision Loss will again offer the popular calendars produced by the Susquehanna Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired.

The new calendar features pictures of blind and visually impaired musicians. We are thrilled that two people from the Center for Vision Loss are featured. Our stars include Hilma Myers, a retired music teacher who plays the piano and the harp, and Mary Ann Alexander who sings and plays the guitar. You can read more about these talented ladies when you receive your calendar.

The calendars will arrive in mid-November. They sell for \$5 each. If you want a calendar, you must place your order by calling the office at 610.433.6018 and pre-pay it by sending your check or money order to Center for Vision Loss, 845 West Wyoming Street, Allentown, PA 18103.

NEW LIFESKILLS CLASSES OFFERED

Lehigh Valley Clients should be sure to check out the offerings of our new monthly informational Lifeskills Classes. **Call Shirley Moyer at 610.433.6018, 226 to arrange transportation.**

October 15, 2010 – “Voting and Transportation”

presented by Mary Ann Alexander and Tony Swartz. 1-3 pm.

November 19, 2010 – “Personal Safety and Fraud”

presented by Crime Victims Council. 1-3 pm.

December 10, 2010 – “Demonstration of Adaptive Aids”

presented by Jerry Marindin, Freedom Scientific. 1-3 pm.

LEHIGH VALLEY CLIENT ACTIVITIES OCTOBER 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					Hunterdon¹ Hills Playhouse	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		Bowling 1-3 pm	Mall Walk 9-10:30 am		Activity Group 1	LVC of Blind Mtg Holy Fmly Mnr 10 am-noon
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	LVC of Blind Evnt Friendly's Rest. 5-8 pm		Mall Walk 9-10:30 am		Lifeskills - Voting/Trnsprtn 1-3 pm	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
		Bowling 1-3 pm	Mall Walk 9-10:30 am		Activity Group 2	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
PA Cncl of Blind Cnvntn Pittsburg, PA			Mall Walk 9-10:30 am		PA Cncl of Blind Cnvntn	

Activity Group 1: "Hospice Care."

**11 am-2 pm. Rose Ackerman, Lehigh
Valley Hospice Center.**

Activity Group 2:

**Pizza Party & Bingo with Bethlehem
Lioness Club. 11 am-2 pm.**

LEHIGH VALLEY CLIENT ACTIVITIES NOVEMBER 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	² Bowling 1-3 pm	³ Mall Walk 9-10:30 am	4	5	6
7	8	9	¹⁰ Mall Walk 9-10:30 am	11	¹² Activity Group Lunch	13
14	15	¹⁶ Bowling 1-3 pm	¹⁷ Mall Walk 9-10:30 am	18	¹⁹ Lifeskills - Pers. Safety & Fraud 1-3 pm	²⁰ LVC of Blind Mtg Holy Fmly Mnr 10 am-noon
21	22	23	²⁴ Mall Walk 9-10:30 am	25	26	27
28	29	30				

**Activity Group Lunch and Escorted Shopping at Red Robin and Walmart, Rt. 248.
11 am-2 pm. Call Barb Dilliard at 610.882.2539 to sign up NO LATER THAN 10/29.
Call Shirley Moyer for transport at 610.433.6018, x. 226**

LEHIGH VALLEY CLIENT ACTIVITIES DECEMBER 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			¹ Mall Walk 9-10:30 am	²	³	⁴
⁵	⁶	⁷ Bowling 1-3 pm	⁸ Mall Walk 9-10:30 am	⁹	¹⁰ Lifeskills - Adaptive Aids 1-3 pm	¹¹ LVC of Blind Mtg Parkland Rest. 11 am - 2pm
¹²	¹³	¹⁴	¹⁵ Mall Walk 9-10:30 am	¹⁶	¹⁷ Activity Group Party	¹⁸
¹⁹	²⁰	²¹ Bowling 1-3 pm	²² Mall Walk 9-10:30 am	²³	²⁴	²⁵
²⁶	²⁷	²⁸	²⁹ Mall Walk 9-10:30 am	³⁰	³¹	

**Activity Group Christmas Party at Parkland Family Restaurant.
Order from menu. Bring a \$5 unisex gift to exchange.**

MONROE COUNTY ACTIVITIES

Remember to call Mary Lou at **570.992.7787** to schedule transportation no later than 7 days prior to event.

BOWLING

Thursday, October 14 – Call for transport by 10/7

SUPPORT GROUP

Monday, October 4 – Call for transport by 9/29

Monday, November 1 – Call for transport by 10/27

Monday, December 6 – Call for transport by 12/1

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING TRIP

A group Christmas shopping trip is scheduled for December 2 from 10 am-2 pm. Clients can go to either Stroud Mall or Walmart. Call for transport by 11/14 and let Mary Lou know where you would like to shop.

SHAWNEE PLAYHOUSE TRIP

The Shawnee Playhouse trip to see “It’s a Wonderful Life” will be held on either Thursday, December 9 at 10 am or Friday, December 10 at 2 pm. The exact date will be announced later. Call to sign up and for transportation no later than 12/1. The cost is \$10 a ticket. If time permits, there will be a guided tour of the set design.

ANNUAL POST HOLIDAY PARTY

The Monroe Support Group’s annual post holiday party will be held on Thursday, January 13, 2011 at the Olive Garden, Route 611, Stroudsburg. The snow date is Friday, January 14. Those who are interested in participating in a fun secret gift exchange should bring a wrapped Pollyanna gift with a value of \$10-\$15. Call for transport by January 7.

LEHIGH VALLEY COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

The LVCB encourages people who are blind or visually impaired to seek independence through education and employment, the learning of blindness skills, and personal and social adjustment. We invite others to join and share with us. Our Fall calendar is full of events you won't want to miss. For more information contact **President Sherry Hancik at 610.865.1704 or hanciks@verizon.net.**

Saturday, October 9, 2010; 10 am-12 noon; Holy Family Manor, 1200 Spring Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018; General business meeting.

Monday, October 11, 2010; 5 pm-8 pm; Friendly's Restaurant, 1491 Macarthur Road, Whitehall, PA 18052; PCB members will hand out our brochures and educational placemats to customers. We may be selling our locally-famous LVCB bars. Yummy!

Friday/Saturday/Sunday, October 22-24, 2010; Green Tree Radisson Hotel, 101 Radisson Drive, Pittsburg, PA 15205; annual statewide convention of the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind; visit www.pcb1.org for more info.

Saturday, November 20, 2010; 10 am-12 noon; Holy Family Manor, 1200 Spring Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018; Election of new officers and business meeting.

Saturday, December 11, 2010; 11 am-2 pm; Parkland Restaurant, 2702 Walbert Avenue, Allentown, PA 18104; Business meeting, lunch and conversation.

DIAMOND SCAVENGER HUNT TO SPARKLE IN OCTOBER!

Downtown Bethlehem will be the location for an exciting Diamond Scavenger Hunt on Sunday, October 10, 2010. Teams of participants will scour the city following clues and hints sent to their cell phones to help them be the first to find and win a fabulous diamond ring. Bixler's Jewelers is sponsoring the event.

Best of all, Center for Vision Loss is the **only charity** which will benefit from this new event. **Hunt participants will be encouraged to donate to Center for Vision Loss at our booth located in Payrow Plaza by the Bethlehem City Hall during registration from 10 am-12 noon.** The hunt will last from 12 noon-2 pm and a rocking after party will be celebrated at Starter's in South Bethlehem from 2 pm-4 pm.

Check your favorite form of news media for more information about this fun day.

LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP)

The LIHEAP helps low-income individuals pay their heating bills through assistance and crisis grants. The program will open November 1, 2010. If you are a Center for Vision Loss client and need assistance in applying for this program, call your caseworker, **Gretchen or Lisa, at 610.433.6018.**

RAFFLE TICKETS STILL FOR SALE

You can still purchase raffle tickets for the 2010-2011 Annual Raffle for \$10 each or six tickets for \$50. Six-\$50 winners are announced each month.

Call Stephanie Houck in the Business Office at 610.433.6018, x. 244.

July Raffle Winners: *Joe Laurito, John Segen, Kylee P. Haggerty, Ellen Fried, Ida Reinert, Hank O. Bonstedt*

August Raffle Winners: *Dennis Heller, Alice Lance, Mary Williams, Mr. & Mrs. Bryon Boos, Ruth Coval, Stan Hause*

September Raffle Winners: *Barb Stengel, George Loveless, Estella Cech, Florence Solt, Evelyn Bollinger, Flo Kresge*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND!

On October 14, 2010, the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind, of which the Center for Vision Loss is a member, will celebrate its 100th Anniversary at a gala in Harrisburg, PA.

The celebration will feature an hour-long special performance by the talented Scott MacIntyre, a top 10 contestant from American Idol's season 8. Congratulations to the PAB for 10 decades of service to the blind and visually impaired in Pennsylvania!

HOLIDAY CLOSING

The offices of the Center for Vision Loss will be closed on the following dates:

Thursday and Friday, November 25 and 26 –

observance of Thanksgiving Day

Friday, December 24 – observance of Christmas Day

Friday, December 31 – observance of New Year's Day

GIVING PAGE

Giving a donation today will help make a difference in the lives of blind and visually impaired people in Lehigh, Northampton and Monroe Counties.

Enclosed please find my gift in the amount of \$_____.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Phone (_____)_____ E-mail_____

This gift is a tribute **In Honor Of** **In Memory Of**

Name_____

Please notify the following person regarding this tribute gift:

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Make checks payable to: Center for Vision Loss

I prefer to pay by credit card:

Name on Card_____

Cardholder's Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Card Number_____ Type of Card _____ Visa _____ MasterCard

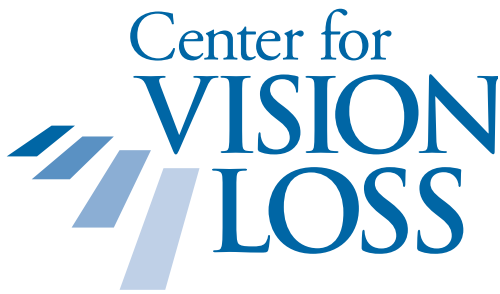
Expiration Date _____Month _____Year Security Code_____

Please detach and send with your contribution to:

Center for Vision Loss, 845 West Wyoming St., Allentown, PA 18103

All gifts to Center for Vision Loss are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. "The official registration and financial information of the Center for Vision Loss may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement."

Questions? Contact the Development Office at 610-433-6018, x. 241.



845 West Wyoming Street
Allentown, PA 18103

We want to inform you that this is the last newsletter you will receive unless:

- **You have donated to us since July 2008,**
- **You are a current client, or**
- **You have continued to support us in some other way.**

Starting in January, 2011, we will inaugurate a new supporter program which will include an annual subscription to this newsletter and other benefits. Watch our next newsletter for details. You may, of course, still opt to receive this newsletter electronically by calling **610.433.6018**, or through our website at **www.centerforvisionloss.org**.

SERVING LEHIGH, NORTHAMPTON AND MONROE COUNTIES



United Way of the
Greater Lehigh Valley

845 West Wyoming Street | Allentown, PA 18103 | P 610.433.6018
4215 Manor Drive | Stroudsburg, PA 18360 | P 570.992.7787



United Way of
Monroe County

www.centerforvisionloss.org