

Message from the Executive Director

The fundamental purpose of nonprofit organizations is to provide programs and services to the community. As a non-profit serving residents of Bucks County, BCABVI is continually seeking ways to gather input from key stakeholders regarding services we offer.

Needs assessments are a way of asking group or community members what they see as the most important needs of that group or community. The results of these surveys are then used to guide future actions including advocacy efforts, development of new programs and identification of new resources that address needs.

BCABVI prides itself on our ability to remain relevant to the ever changing needs of our community and specifically for those members who are blind and visually impaired. To make sure we are on target, BCABVI is currently participating in a statewide needs assessment survey sponsored by the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind.

The survey is being conducted by Analytic Insight, an independent research organization. Surveyors randomly select names from lists of staff and clients who have had some contact with agencies serving the blind and visually impaired and conduct a 10 minute phone survey.

A random selection of BCABVI staff and clients will be contacted as part of this survey process. If you do not want to be included as a potential respondent, please contact Anne Marie at 215-968-9400 or email ahyer@bucksblind.org and I will remove your name from the potential pool of respondents.

Respondents will be asked to share their experience/opinion on several topics including assistive technology, transportation, mobility, housing issues, social needs, employment and general demographics. All answers are completely confidential and respondents' names are not shared to ensure privacy.

Analytic Insight will compile data collected and provide a report to both the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind and BCABVI. The results are only as good as the information provided, so we ask that if you are selected to be part of the survey please be open and honest about your experiences. Thank you in advance for sharing your experiences as we seek to improve access to quality services for all Pennsylvanians who are blind and visually impaired.

Notes from the Social Work Corner



“You must have long term goals to keep you from being frustrated by short term failures.” – Charles C. Noble

As we welcome this Spring Season, it’s time to think about fresh starts and the annual interview with your social worker. We value the annual interview as an opportunity to partner with you and make sure you get the most out of your involvement with BCABVI.

Together we will review your current goals, challenges, changes and accomplishments specified in your service plan. We will identify which of your goals have been achieved and clarify areas in which you feel additional supports are needed. With your input, we will be developing new goals for the upcoming year that focus on independence and promote living a “rich, vibrant life”.

We will be contacting active clients starting in April to update service plans for 2015. For your part, we ask that you begin to consider the skills trainings, resources or support you will need to further your independence. While we recognize ‘more social outing or fun activities’ are part of overall quality of life enjoyment, they should not be the primary focus of goal setting.

As you think about future goals, we encourage you to get input from family members, friends and even other clients who may have helpful suggestions. The social workers will be able to provide additional recommendations at the time of the interview, but remember these are **your** goals and should be driven by what you want to achieve.

As always, please contact us with any questions or concerns,

Sheryl and Ellen



From the Lion's Den

BCABVI LIONS CLUB BASKET RAFFLE 2015 WINNERS

1. PIGGY BANK - \$100.00 CASH - Pat Capparella
2. SAFE KEEPING - \$100.00 CASH - Barbara Marshaleck
3. COZY CAT – Shirley Apeldorn
4. DOG DELIGHTS – Tom Spence
5. GIFT CARD BONANZA – Jackie & Ron c/o Bill Stetler
6. A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES – E. Kashinsky
7. CHOCOLATE LOVERS – Patrick Collins
8. ITALIAN FEAST – Joy Ellis
9. WINE & CHEESE – Kim Graham
10. KUERIG INDIVIDUAL COFFEE BREWER – Sue Davidson

Our supporters include:

Lions, clients, family, friends, staff, and board members.

Thank you to each and everyone

The Bensalem Lions Club Easter Bunny
hopped over to pick our winners.
(Thank you Ken Moore!)



Center Closings

Monday May 25, 2015 - Memorial Day office closed

Sign Ups

Wednesday May 13, 2015 *Arts and Crafts Project*

Show your creative side by making your own paper mache vase. Makes a great gift or use it as part of your home décor!

Cost: \$6 per vase

Wednesday May 20, 2015 - *45 minute meal workshop*

Learn to make a nutritious meal for you and your family in only 45 minutes! Meal prep and kitchen tips make dinner a snap. Taught by Kinshasha Coghill LVRT. Note: group limited to 7 people

Cost: There is no cost for this program

Wednesday June 10, 2015 - *Volunteering in Second Look Newtown Thrift Shop*

Are you interested in volunteering but don't know where to start? Consider BCABVI's thrift shop as a first step towards sharing your talents and skills with our community. This workshop will outline a new program designed to help clients build confidence, teach the use of low vision aids to complete tasks and how to educate the public about blindness and visual impairments in a safe and supportive setting. Ellen Dzwonar will facilitate.

Cost: There is no cost for this program

Wednesday June 17, 2015 - *Shake and Bake workshop*

Sweet, savory and healthy baking. Taught by Kinshasha Coghill LVRT. Note: group limited to 7 people

Cost: There is no cost for this program

Wednesday June 24, 2015 - *Adjustment to Blindness Support group*

A new support group for people experiencing total blindness (clients with only light perception or no light perception). There are many aspects to adjusting to the loss of vision and the support of others can often help. Share experiences, obstacles and options to overcome new challenges.

Cost: there is no cost for this program

Client of the Month

BCABVI has started a new program to recognize the incredible accomplishments of our clients. Each month, one client who embodies our vision of a rich, vibrant and independent life will be selected as BCABVI's Client of the Month.

Nominations are encouraged from clients, staff, or volunteers of BCABVI. All nominations must be submitted to Sheryl Fitzgerald by the first of each month. Nominations will be reviewed and a winner selected by a committee based on the following criteria:

BCABVI's Client of the Month should:

- 1) exemplify the agency's mission
- 2) actively participate in agency services that increase their independence and demonstrate proficiency in using equipment/skills in their everyday life
- 3) demonstrate empathy for other clients, taking on a supportive role to help others experiencing vision loss
- 4) advocate for themselves and help educate the general public about blindness and visual impairment

The winner will be featured on our Facebook page by the 15th of each month. They will also be awarded a \$25 gift certificate to Second Look Newtown Thrift Shop in recognition of their achievements.

To start this new program, May's client of the month was nominated and selected by the staff at BCABVI. After much discussion, we are pleased to announce **Carol Ryder** was picked as our first winner! To read about Carol's accomplishments, go to BCABVI's facebook page or click on the facebook link through our website www.bucksblind.org.

Congratulations to Carol and we look forward to receiving nominations for June's Client of the Month!



Paying It Forward

Vision loss is not limited to Bucks County. BCABVI focuses our services on serving our community, but recognizes that vision loss impacts people worldwide. Just as our community supports us, we feel compelled to do our part in serving the greater good.

Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (VOSH) is a non-profit organization that travels the developing world and the U.S. providing education and free quality vision care services through short-term clinics to those in need.

BCABVI was fortunate to receive a generous donation from Drs. David and Denise Wilcox which was used to purchase a new examination chair, phoropter and stand for our Low Vision Clinic in Newtown, PA. At Dr. Wilcox's suggestion, the existing equipment was donated to VOSH and given a new purpose in a clinic being established in Nicaragua.



equipment repurposed at VOSH clinic



New examination equipment donated by Dr. Wilcox

"We received the phoropter and wanted to let you know that we appreciate it very much. It is one of the most frequently requested items. The chair should be in Nicaragua by now. Thank you for all you do." David R. Stacy, O.D.,
Director, VOSH International, President, VOSH, AZ

Approximately 670 million people worldwide are functionally blind or visually impaired because they do not have a pair of eyeglasses. BCABVI works in partnership with local Lions Clubs to collect used eyeglasses that are no longer needed. VOSH refurbishes the donated eyeglasses and sends them to schools and clinics where they change lives. In 2014, we collected 16,626 pairs of glasses thanks to our community partners.

Helen Keller said "Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much". At BCABVI, we take these words to heart. When you support BCABVI at the local level, you can be confident that your donation impacts many lives, both directly by providing valuable services in Bucks County and indirectly through our strategic partnerships. Working together, we can achieve our vision of rich, vibrant and independent lives for people with blindness and visual impairments.