

THE VOICE

Summer 2011 · Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired 1926 — 2011

VABVI - Seeking New Clients!

VABVI would like to take this opportunity to invite our readers to inform their friends and family of the services we offer, and to seek out those who might benefit from our services but are currently unaware of them or reluctant to receive them. VABVI's services for adults include: rehabilitation, orientation and mobility training, adaptive techniques for daily living, procurement and training in assistive technology use, social networking opportunities, and the availability of a statewide transportation network. By providing our clients and students with training, education, adaptive tools and assistive technology, we enable them to build the foundation of skills that will allow them to overcome their vision loss and live active and independent lives.

One of the most common concerns among our adult clients is that their vision loss will eventually require them to give up living in their own home and

move into an assisted living facility. According to an analysis of VABVI's Reviews of Service - surveys that each client completes upon ending their relationship with VABVI - over 90% of respondents feel better equipped to remain living independently in their own home after receiving services from VABVI.

Continued on next page...



Adult Service Provider (ASP) Ira Chomsky instructs a client on how to use a CCTV magnifier for reading

BRATTLEBORO	MONTPELIER	RUTLAND	SOUTH BURLINGTON
38 Park Place, Ste. 2	10 Main Street	80 West Street, Ste. 202	60 Kimball Ave.
(802) 254-8761	(802) 828-5997	(802) 775-6452	(802) 863-1358
Or toll free at	Or toll free at	Or toll free at	Or toll free at
(877) 350-8840	(877) 350-8838	(877) 350-8839	(800) 639-5861

VABVI also hosts Peer Assisted Learning and Support (PALS) groups, one of our most popular and effective programs. Established in 1994, PALS group meetings are facilitated by VABVI staff and meet every month in eleven locations across the state. For many clients, especially those new to vision loss, PALS offers the opportunity to receive instruction, training, and encouragement in a friendly and supportive atmosphere while surrounded by peers who face similar challenges.

Many PALS group members choose to take part in outings across Vermont, and clients who participate in these sessions gain confidence and become more comfortable traveling in their own home, neighborhood, and town. Being comfortable navigating familiar and unfamiliar environments is one of the skills that our PALS facilitators



VABVI's South Burlington PALS group listens a presentation before enjoying a luncheon hosted by the LIONS club



Above, members of VABVI's South Burlington PALS group pose for a group photo

work hardest to develop in our clients, because doing so is crucial to their effort to maintain their independence and sense of belonging.

Anyone interested in learning more about VABVI's programs and services should contact Nancy Boldt, our Intake Coordinator, at (800) 639-5861 extension 230 or nboldt@vabvi.org.

**The VOICE is a publication of the
Development Office.**

**Questions, Comments,
Ideas?**

**Please contact Ayesah Raftery
at (800) 639-5861 ext. 224**

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VABVI'S Collaboration with Guiding Eyes

VABVI is pleased to announce our new partnership with the Guiding Eyes for the Blind Canine Development Center, where we allow them to hold instructional sessions for prospective guide dog trainers at VABVI's headquarters in South Burlington. Guiding Eyes is an internationally accredited, non-profit guide dog training school with over fifty years of experience in providing blind and visually impaired individuals with guide dogs, training, and lifetime support services.

A puppy isn't born a guide dog, but is made one through the dedication and commitment of an entire team of individuals. Guide dog raisers cover a broad spectrum of individuals from various walks of life, and include couples, families with children, young adults, and senior citizens. Raisers live in urban, suburban, and rural areas - in



apartments, town-homes, and single-family homes.



Puppy training lasts one and a half years and ends with raisers returning a well-socialized, young adult dog to Guiding Eyes training staff. All of the raiser's hard work pays off when a blind person receives a guide dog, who provides them with independence, companionship, and mobility. If you are interested in becoming a puppy raiser, contact Rachel Silverman, Puppy Program Regional Manager, at (845) 661-1014 or rsilverman@guidingeyes.org.

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Vision Walk

VABVI would like to take this opportunity to invite you to attend our first annual two-mile "Vision Walk" walk-a-thon, to take place at Dorset Park in South Burlington on Sunday, September 18. Registration begins at 9:30am, and the walk itself begins at 10:00am. The walk will be followed with a BBQ at Dorset Park, with music and food that will be available for purchase.

Walk with us as an individual, form your own team, support a walker, or become a sponsor! Registration fees are \$15 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. All proceeds will be used to fund VABVI's programs and services. We hope you will choose to show your support for our mission by joining us on what promises to be a beautiful and fun-filled day!

IMPORTANT: Please do not bring your dog to the walk unless he or she is a service animal. There will be many service animals present, and other pets often try to play with or otherwise distract these animals, who need to remain focused on obeying their owner's commands. Anyone who brings their dog or other pet will be held responsible for any violation of Vermont's Interference with or Cruelty to a Service Animal Act. For more information on this law, please see Vermont Statute Title 13, § 355.

Complete this registration form, tear off, and mail. Or, register online at www.firstgiving.com/vabvi

Team Name: _____

Name _____

Add _____

City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

I am a team captain team member individual

My goal is to raise \$_____ to help VABVI

(The recommended minimum goal is \$100.)

In consideration of me and/or my minor child being permitted to participate in the Walk-A-Thon, I hereby assume all risks that might be associated with the event. I further waive, release, and discharge any claim against sponsoring agencies, companies, staff, volunteers, or other representatives for any injuries or damages to my person and/or my minor child or property while a participant in this event. This waiver also applies to on or off the premises at any time during the event. I also consent to the use of photos, film or videotape taken of me and/or my minor child to be used by the Association for publicity and public education purposes.

Signature (REQUIRED)

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VABVI Walk-A-Thon

Sunday, September 18, 2011

SPONSOR SHEET

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Team Name: _____ Captain _____

Name of Sponsor	Amount Pledged	Online Donations
1. _____	_____	\$ _____
2. _____	_____	
3. _____	_____	
4. _____	_____	
5. _____	_____	Total Donations \$ _____
6. _____	_____	
7. _____	_____	
8. _____	_____	
9. _____	_____	
10. _____	_____	Subtotal _____ Matching gift _____ Total enclosed _____ Office use only _____
11. _____	_____	
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Remember to tell your sponsors they can pledge online!

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July Update

VABVI would like our readers to know about a new product designed to make it easier for individuals who are blind or visually impaired to navigate the world around them. The Trekker Breeze is a hand-held device that uses a Global Positioning System (GPS) signal to pinpoint the user's exact location and verbally announces the names of streets, intersections, and landmarks that the user passes. The Breeze can be operated with a single hand - leaving the other hand free to hold a white cane - and features large, distinctive buttons that are easy to distinguish from each other. The Breeze has a battery life of eight hours and can also be used to determine one's location when riding a bus. The Breeze costs \$929, and can be purchased by contacting Humanware, a popular online distributor of adaptive technology, at (800) 722-3393 or via computer at www.humanware.com.



Shelburne Museum and Art for the Visually Impaired

The Shelburne Museum recently announced that it is holding a series of events designed to showcase art exhibits that were designed to be experienced by individuals who are visually impaired.

- On August 30th, the Stagecoach Inn will host an eclectic and diverse collection of folk art. Visitors will have the opportunity to experience various 3-D sculptures, including a giant tooth. This is also a chance to explore the Georgian-style building itself, whose design was extremely popular in the 18th century.
- On October 25th, the Hats and Fragrance Textile Factory will host an exhibit of internationally known quilts. Visitors can learn about the various stages of quilting and feel different types of textiles and quilting patterns. This collection is located in a hand-hewn timber structure that served as both a distillery and a barn in the past, and is surrounded by a garden filled with the plants and herbs used to make various dyes and fragrances.

*To attend, please contact Angela Pratt of the Shelburne Museum
at (802) 985-3346 extension 3393, or apratt@shelburnemuseum.org*

Tribute Gifts

Tribute gifts are made **In Honor Of** or **In Memory Of** someone who has added special meaning to a donor's life.

*Below are those who were honored
from May 10th to July 18th, 2011*

VABVI

Arlene

Norbert

Zama Beattie

Paul Beck

Julia Bessy

Oscar Boucher

Jason Burleson

Pat Carruth

Norm Case

Harry Conklin

Alice Craigue

Richard Erickson

Lillian Flanagan

Bettye Gale

Rena Gleason

Donald Grant

Cynthia Hackett

Nancy Lemmo

Peter Lemmo

Forrest Parmenter

Marcel Riendeau

Edgar Robinson

Ruth Skudera

Harry Silloway

Dale Richard Smith

Dale Tompkins

Matthew Turner

Leo P. Vaillancourt

Lila Wood

Geraldine Ives Young



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VABVI would like to remind all of our friends and supporters of our upcoming
“Vision Walk” Walk-a-Thon, to be held at Dorset Park in
South Burlington on Sunday, September 18th.

We hope to see you there!