



# INSIGHT

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
**LACKAWANNA BLIND ASSOCIATION**  
 "SERVING THE BLIND & VISUALLY IMPAIRED"



## Spotlight on Vision Screening

The Lackawanna Blind Association (LBA) is dedicated to the Prevention of Blindness. Vision screening in preschools and daycares is one method we use to accomplish this mission. Every school year, our Prevention of Blindness Coordinators, Anne Lawler & Lisa Walter, visit preschools and daycares throughout Lackawanna County to screen the children for vision problems. If any issues are found, the parents are notified to follow-up with their eye care professional.

In addition to these vision screenings, the third-grade classes in Lackawanna County schools also participate in the LBA's Magic World of Vision program. Each child is supplied with seasonal booklets filled with games, trivia, and stories highlighting sports, eye safety, and blue-light dangers. In the spring, a poster contest is held where the students design coloring pages for our annual coloring book. Ten entries are selected to be included in the coloring book and those ten students are invited to our agency for a pizza party and entertainment by Damian the Magician. The coloring books are then distributed the following school year to the preschools and daycares during vision screenings.



Pictured above is POB Coordinator Anne Lawler and C-Well Bunny .

In addition to the vision screenings the LBA conducts educational programs where a special character makes an appearance and his name is C-Well Bunny! He helps the coordinators demonstrate to the children how to care for their vision. C-Well Bunny teaches the children about eye safety and wearing goggles when playing sports, to never play with fireworks, and limit their time on electronic devices such as computers and tablets. Good nutrition for eye health is also high on C-Well's list!

Thanks to the dedicated Prevention of Blindness staff at LBA, we are educating our young children in order for them to have quality learning experiences and healthy futures!

The mission of the Lackawanna Blind Association is to support and promote the interests of the blind and visually impaired, and the prevention of avoidable blindness.

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# 91ST ANNUAL HELEN KELLER DAY SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2020 - FIORELLI'S IN PECKVILLE

Helen Keller Day features many people in the spotlight, however you may not know there are many Friends of the Blind working behind the scenes year round. The Friends of the Blind are a group of women and men who commit annually to support the agency and our mission. Funds raised by the Friends of the Blind pay for annual special outings for the clients and support all our programs. The Friends of the Blind assist with Helen Keller Day in so many ways — selling tickets, raffles, basket donations, staffing booths, and much more. Thank you, dear Friends! Helen Keller Day wouldn't be possible without you!

**Would you like to join the Friends of the Blind?** Just contact us at the Agency and we will help you get started!

The fashion show features Small Fryes Children's Boutique, Ann Taylor Loft, Pierre's and Boden. The Lackawanna Blind Association thanks the fashion show participants and all of our volunteers and sponsors for their continuing support in making this a successful event. Special thanks to this year's Helen Keller Day Chair, Michele Albright.

**Please mark your calendar and attend this entertaining event!**

**Sunday, April 5, 2020**

**Fiorelli's, 1501 Main Street, Peckville, PA 18452**

Doors open 11:30a.m.; Lunch at Noon; Fashion Show 1:30p.m.

Individual tickets are \$35.00; \$15.00 for children under 10

Tables of 8 or 10 can be reserved for \$280.00 or \$350.00

Deadline for ticket purchase is **March 26!**

**Please note: Reservations are required!**

**NO TICKETS CAN BE SOLD AT THE DOOR!**

**Please call (570) 342-7613 for more information or to make reservations**



Helen Keller Day committee members for 2020:

Seated from left to right: Michele Albright, Cathy Van Nort, Maria Kelly and Louise Passarella.

Standing from left to right: Atty. Jerry Musheno, Noreen Burke, Mary Ann Wilcha, Leigh Fennie, Kristen Hinds, Mary Lou Wascavich, Executive Director; Karl Pfeiffenberger and Janet May.

## PARTNERSHIP LEVELS FOR HELEN KELLER DAY

Please help us continue our programs and services to the blind and visually impaired in Lackawanna County by supporting Helen Keller Day 2020:

**\$5000 Platinum Visionary Partner**

**\$2500 Major Visionary Partner**

**\$1000 Visionary Partner**

**\$100 Seer Partner**

**\$500 Luminary Partner**

**\$50 Guiding Light Partner**

**\$250 Sight Saver Partner**

**\$25 Eye Safety Partner**

Please use the enclosed envelope if you wish to send in a gift. Your name or business will be listed in the Helen Keller Day program book, unless you choose to remain anonymous. Any donation is greatly appreciated!

## YOU GIVE LIGHT TO YOUR NEIGHBORS

"The Lackawanna Blind Association allows me to make new friends that I can relate with. I wake up every Tuesday excited to learn what I will be making at Sensory Development. Each project allows me to feel pride in myself."



Pamela Riley,  
Carbondale

"The Lackawanna Blind Association is a big help with rides to get my injections in my eyes. I enjoy the exercise class very much. I made quilts years ago for Helen Keller Day."



Kay Armfield,  
Scranton

"The Lackawanna Blind Association helps me to get through my visual impairment and to socialize with people with the same visual problems. Exercise Class keeps me moving which helps with the effects of my stroke. Life Skills with Lindsay helps me with my diet. The agency also assisted my blind sister."



Carmella Walsh, Scranton

## THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING A GIFT!

Lackawanna Blind Association does not share donor information with anyone, other than publishing a list thanking donors by name only. Donors may also request that their gift remain entirely anonymous.

## Volunteer Profile: Friends of the Blind



The Friends of the Blind, formerly known as the Ladies' Auxiliary, has for nine decades faithfully served the agency in many ways, including hosting the very first Helen Keller Day.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to one of the faithful members of the Friends of the Blind and Life Skills Instructor/Diet & Nutrition Expert **Lindsay Leventhal** (pictured at left). Lindsay's mother, Rose Bud Leventhal, got her involved with Helen Keller Day at the age of 17. Lindsay has generously been providing fabulous large raffle prizes every year and has been presenting Nutrition Programs to our clients every week for over 30 years, providing them with healthy eating and living tips. Lindsay stated "doing the work is very inspirational. It makes me realize how fortunate I am to be able to do this work."

The lives of our blind and visually impaired clients are abundantly enhanced thanks to the Friends of the Blind members such as Lindsay! To all our Friends of the Blind, thank you, thank you, thank you!

*"There is no better way to thank God for your sight than by giving a helping hand to someone in the dark."*  
— **Helen Keller**

**THANK YOU** to these outstanding members of our community for their dedicated support of our agency and the needs of the blind and visually impaired. We truly appreciate your faithful generosity in organizing annual fundraising events on our behalf!

### FUNDRAISING EVENTS

#### Scranton Lions' Dream Game

Scranton Lions Club members present a check to Mary Lou Wascavich, LBA Exec. Dir., for \$16,000, the proceeds of the 85th Annual Dream Game held on July 18, 2019. First row, from left: Kristen Hinds, Dave Rudis, Mary Lou Wascavich, Dr. Thomas Jordan, Nick Rodio and Mary Claire Boylan. Second row: Bill Dempsey, Dan Loftus, Allan Hetkowski and Karl Pfeiffenberger.



#### Pasta Fiesta

The annual Pasta Fiesta, hosted by Mary Regina Perry and Bob Harrington (pictured below), was held on November 19, 2019 at Wood Grille, Bundy Street in Scranton. The annual event raised \$5,000.00 for our Agency.



#### Cocktails for a Cause

Dr. Rebecca Schoonover (below, right) presents her 2019 CFAC donation in memory of Thom Mann, a friend and eye care professional, to Mary Lou Wascavich, LBA Executive Director, in the amount of \$1,348.55. The 14th annual Cocktails for a Cause was held at Backyard Ale House in Scranton on November 2, 2019.





## Happy Fall!

Above and below, clients enjoy lunch at Fratelli's Pizza & Pasta House during our annual Fall Outing.



Perry Brunori & Renee Campbell are helped during Sensory Development Class by two University of Scranton students.



# Client Activities

## WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY

Established in the U.S. in October 1964, White Cane Safety Day reminds us of the need of the blind and visually impaired to be able to move about the world, and the "wish and will to be free; the unquenchable spirit and the inextinguishable determination to be independent." (Maurer, 2018). The White Cane allows the progression of freedom and independence to continue in their lives.

Pictured at right, the LBA outreach table at the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center on White Cane Safety Day 2019. Executive Director Mary Lou Wascavich and Case Work Coordinator Mary Claire Boylan staffed the table.



Maurer, M. (2018) *White Cane Safety Day: A Symbol of Independence*. Retrieved from <https://nfb.org/white-cane-safety-day>

## BY THE NUMBERS

Are you curious about how donations and funding procured by the Lackawanna Blind Association are used? Here is a breakdown of where those dollars were spent during the **2018/2019 fiscal year**:

### LACKAWANNA COUNTY

**274** individuals received **2340** sessions of independent living services in their homes or in a community setting to maintain or improve their activities of daily living

**17** individuals participated in **154** sessions of Support Groups

**1373** hours of service were logged by **20** volunteers for the Pell Radio Reading Services as broadcast on WUSR-FM 99.5 FM, Monday through Friday, 8 am - 10 am

**22** clients shared and learned in **12** Book Club meetings and enjoyed **12** descriptive movies together

**438** children at **15** sites were educated about eye care and safety

**2433** 3rd-grade students in **93** classes participated in the Magic World of Vision Eye Safety Education Program

### SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY

**20** clients received **119.5** hours of support services including home visits and assistance with such tasks as paying bills and handling correspondence

**15** clients received a total of **129.5** hours of Transportation and Escort Services to Medical Appointments and Grocery/ Personal Needs Shopping

**334** children at **9** sites were screened for vision problems and **20** children were referred for follow-up care

## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

- \* Have an extra hour or so that you would like to spend in the company of grateful individuals?
- \* Been meaning to “give back” in 2020 as part of your New Year’s Resolutions?
- \* Hoping to set a good example by volunteering your time and/or skills?
- \* Want to make a difference in the world today?

Consider becoming a Friend of the Blind and volunteering with LBA in the near future. You just might be surprised how much you enjoy it!

**VOLUNTEERING is COOL!!**

**TO NOTIFY US OF A CHANGE OF ADDRESS,  
OR IF YOU WISH TO BE REMOVED FROM OUR  
MAILING LIST, PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE  
AND PRESS 5 TO LEAVE A MESSAGE.**

## **To Our Clients, Volunteers, and Supporters:**

2019 was another very positive year for the Lackawanna Blind Association! Our focus on the prevention of blindness continued as we ventured to incorporate technology and digital devices into the lives of our clients by offering access and instruction for these devices.

Our Facebook page and website were consistently updated as new information became available. We endeavored to keep current on our latest agency news, posting new photos, and the current month’s activities calendar. Please be sure to like and follow us on Facebook and visit us often at [www.lackawannablind.org](http://www.lackawannablind.org).

In 2019 we provided support for over 250 blind and visually impaired clients, distributed large-print calendars and other assistive devices, offered referral services for low-cost eyeglasses for hundreds more, along with the prevention of blindness screenings and education for thousands of adults and children. Through the incredible support of our dedicated volunteers, we accomplished much with our limited staff and budget. Thank you, volunteers, from the bottom of our appreciative hearts! Most of all, we are grateful for the privilege of serving our extraordinary clients, whose courage and determination inspire us every day. Best wishes for a successful New Year!

Mary Lou Wascavich, Executive Director

United Way of  
Lackawanna and Wayne Counties



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