



Summer 2000
Volume I

THE CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE **Beam**

News From and About The Chicago Lighthouse For People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

GRANTS GIVE MOBILITY TO LIGHTHOUSE LOW VISION SERVICES

The Chicago Lighthouse Low Vision Clinic will be able to reach more people than ever thanks to the support of Lions Clubs International Foundation which recently awarded \$200,000 to The Lighthouse for use in expanding low vision services to over 1,200 people per year. The Retirement Research Foundation generously provided a \$50,000 matching grant for the Lions' donation.

On May 18, 2000, Dr. Jean Behar, president elect of Lions Clubs International, presented the check to Shawn Hunt, chairman of The Lighthouse Board of Directors, Dr. John J. Rimkus, director of The Lighthouse Low Vision Clinic, and Jo Merlau, chair of the Low Vision Clinic Board Committee, at an appreciation breakfast held for Illinois Lions District 1-A Governors and Vice Governors at The Chicago Lighthouse.



(from left to right) Dr. John Rimkus, director of the Lighthouse Low Vision Services, Lou Torres, president of Illinois District 1-A Lions, Dr. Jean Behar, president elect of Lions Clubs International, and James Kesteloot, executive director of The Chicago Lighthouse.

As many as 75% of people who suffer from low vision do not seek help, and many are seniors who cannot afford the cost associated with this care. These grants will allow The

(Continued on Page 2)

TRIBUTES AND TRIUMPHS HIGHLIGHT 7TH ANNUAL GALA

On April 14, 2000, nearly 400 guests attended The Chicago Lighthouse's 7th Annual Gala Benefit, *Celebrating the Millennium Child with a Crystal Carnival*. Inaugurating the new Crystal Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Chicago, this event featured an evening of music, dancing, games and prizes which raised more than \$250,000 to support programs for people who are blind or visually impaired at The Chicago Lighthouse.

This year's event honored Christine H. Bakalar, chair emeritus of The Lighthouse Board of Directors, with a Lifetime Achievement Award for more than 25 years of selfless dedication and love for



Dr. Gerald Fishman, UIC Department of Ophthalmology and Lighthouse Low Vision Clinics, and his wife, Marlene, enjoy the sounds of the Gentlemen of Leisure brass.

Questions or
comments on this
newsletter?

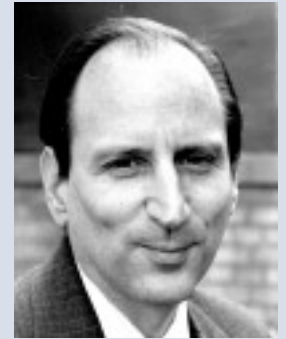
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(Continued on Page 3)

From The EXECUTIVE Director

I am very excited to announce and present the first issue of the new Chicago Lighthouse Beam. As we considered improving our newsletter, we redefined its goals in order to touch upon the interests of Chicago Lighthouse's diverse audience.

With an expanded layout, the new Lighthouse Beam will feature our program efforts, as well as highlight exciting events and fundraising activities at The Lighthouse. In addition, we will strive to provide educational and resourceful information relating to the issues of blindness and low vision. We are very interested in your observations and comments on this first issue, and ask that you fill out and return the survey we have enclosed.



I am also pleased to announce that in May, Lions Clubs International Foundation awarded The Chicago Lighthouse a \$200,000 grant to expand our Low Vision Clinic services, and the Retirement Research Foundation generously provided a \$50,000 matching grant to the Lions donation. In addition, District 1-A Lions Clubs pledged \$46,000 to enhance the Low Vision expansion project.

Lastly, I want to thank all of The Lighthouse family of supporters who have made contributions this past year, and I would like to personally thank Christine Bakalar, chair emeritus of The Chicago Lighthouse Board of Directors and recipient of our Lifetime Achievement Award, for her many years of dedicated service. Your support insures that our vision of providing services which promote self sufficiency and independence are available to people who are blind, and that we can continue to grow and develop further opportunities.

Sincerely and Best Wishes,

James Kesteloot

GRANTS *(Continued from page 1)*

Chicago Lighthouse to obtain a van specifically used for on-site low vision exams to assisted living homes, as well as more schools and communities in need of these specialized services. To continue reaching more patients each year, the agency will hire a new full-time optometrist and part-time social worker to increase staff capacity of traveling low vision services.

As the senior population continues to grow at a rate four times faster than any other age group, the Lighthouse Low Vision Clinic will focus its expanded services on elders. Relationships will be established with assisted living facilities and other community facilities to implement regular monthly visits for low vision exams and follow-up. The van will also be used to transport patients to the Low Vision Clinic located at The Chicago Lighthouse when it is more appropriate than visiting a traveling clinic location.

Many times patients either do not know about specialized low vision services and where to get them, or were not referred to a low vision specialist by their

doctor. These grants will allow The Lighthouse to spread awareness about blindness to the public and health care providers to increase referrals.

THE LIGHTHOUSE LOW VISION SERVICES



In Illinois, it is estimated that over 400,000 people are blind or visually impaired, with as many as 180,000 residing in the Chicago Metropolitan area. The Chicago Lighthouse Low Vision Clinic has served over 23,000 people since its opening in 1957. As the only Lighthouse program with a fee for services, the Clinic offers either a sliding scale pay option or grants from other sources to cover exams and prescribed devices for those people who are not adequately covered through insurance. No one is denied services at the Low Vision Clinic due to an inability to pay. Over the years, the Clinic has expanded services to include a satellite clinic in Skokie, IL, and participates in the "Seeing Is Believing" program, a traveling service which tests children in their school setting and provides appropriate lenses and devices.

GALA *(Continued from page 1)*

The Chicago Lighthouse. The recognition program, presented as a “roast”, was cleverly prepared by Donna Dudley, former Lighthouse staff member and personal friend, together with J. Stanley Pepper, chair of The Lighthouse Board of Governors, and James Kesteloot, executive director of The Chicago Lighthouse. A video greeting to Christine, presented in absentia by Gala Committee honorary chair, Jack Greenberg, CEO of McDonald’s Corporation, was laced with mirth, yet abundant with tribute and sincere compliment.

The pre-dinner reception, sponsored by McDonald’s Corporation, featured music by VisionQuest, the unique rhythm and blues band from The Chicago Lighthouse, and provided an opportunity for guests to mingle and bid on the Silent Auction. Thanks to American Airlines, exclusive Gala airline sponsor, for select raffle and auction prize destinations, and to all our silent auction donors, whose generosity helped make the Gala a success.

During the evening, The Chicago Lighthouse was acknowledged through stirring testimonials delivered by parents of children currently enrolled in the Birth-to-Three Family Intervention Program. Inspirational key note speaker, Cara Dunne Yates, U.S. Paralympic World Cup Skiing Champion and U.S. Cycling Federation Champion, who has been blind since the age of 3, spoke about turning obstacles into opportunities. Cara’s mother, Mary Zabelski, is the director of educational services for The Lighthouse Development Center for Blind, Multi-Disabled Children, and both were featured in a compelling interview with 20/20’s Hugh Downs which was shown during Cara’s Gala introduction.

John Records Landecker, Oldies 104.3 radio personality, once again enhanced the gala as entertaining master of ceremonies. Landecker announced that a forthcoming concert will take place this year benefiting The Lighthouse in conjunction with Oldies 104.3 WMJK.

Following the dinner and formal program, guests danced to the energetic music of Chicago’s sensational Gentlemen of Leisure, as the lights of Chicago’s magnificent riverfront formed a crystal backdrop. Guests also tried their luck at a variety of classy carnival games which included a ring toss over bottles of champagne and a putting course through the base of a ten foot lighthouse.

The Chicago Lighthouse expresses its sincere appreciation to the 7th Annual Gala sponsors, donors, guests, board members, Benefit Committee, UIC’s Alpha Phi Omega Humanitarian Services Fraternity, volunteers and staff for contributing to the success of this benefit, and for supporting the services of our agency.



James Kesteloot, Executive Director of The Chicago Lighthouse (left) with Christine H. Bakalar, Lifetime Achievement Award Honoree, and Lighthouse Board Chair, Shawn Hunt (right).



J. Stanley Pepper, Lighthouse Board of Governors Chairman, accepts Gala Dinner Chair Award from Shawn Hunt.



Ms. Tina Lavezzorio, Mazza Foundation president (center) with James Kesteloot and his wife, Barbara.

THE LIGHTHOUSE HELPS STUDENTS LOOK TOWARD A BRIGHT FUTURE

The Chicago Lighthouse presented its annual Career Days on April 27 and 28, 2000, by offering a "Career Vision into the Millennium" to over 100 junior and senior high school students who are blind or visually impaired.

James Kesteloot, executive director of The Chicago Lighthouse, opened the day by inviting students and teachers to feel at home inside the agency. Afterwards, the students enthusiastically found their way to hear presentations by professionals who are also blind or visually impaired in such fields as music, law, and broadcasting. Special guest speakers included Bob Greenberg, radio broadcaster for WNDZ-AM, and Anthony Thomas, attorney in the Illinois Public Defenders Office.

Career Days was designed to give students who are blind or visually impaired confidence in choosing and pursuing a desired career. Students left the day with excitement and a feeling of hope by meeting with professionals who prove that being blind or visually impaired is no obstacle to a successful career.

The Chicago Lighthouse Vocational Evaluation Program, which tests individuals who are blind or visually impaired on skills such as computers, typing, piece work and more, has been hosting Career Days for 14 years. Each year, Visual Itinerary Teachers and their students from Illinois and Wisconsin attend the event. Ora Smith, program manager of the Vocational Evaluation Program, says many attendees return in the summer for a skills evaluation and to discover what they want to do in their future. For information on Career Days or the Vocational Evaluation Center, please contact Ora Smith at 312-666-1331 x3424.

CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE INDUSTRIES CELEBRATES THREE MILLIONTH CLOCK

Chicago Lighthouse Industries, an industrial training and employment program at The Chicago Lighthouse, celebrated the new millennium by producing its three millionth clock on January 10, 2000 and reflected on its growth and success through a dedication held in Washington, DC, on January 28.

James Kesteloot, executive director of The Chicago Lighthouse, and Daniel Lee, director of Chicago Lighthouse Industries, presented its three millionth GSA clock to Frank Pugliese, Commissioner of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Supply Service for its support over the past 23 years. In 1977, GSA awarded The Chicago Lighthouse its first clock contract to serve as the sole supplier of battery-operated wall clocks to the federal government.

The clocks evolved from a brainstorming session in 1975 when a group of Lighthouse employees sat down to determine a product that could be made by people who were blind or visually impaired. During the session, it was suggested that clocks would be worth investigating, and it proved to be the right choice.



Chicago Lighthouse Industries' marketing and manufacturing team accepts *Manufacturer That Counts Award* from the Chicago Manufacturing Center.

Over the next 23 years, Chicago Lighthouse Industries evolved into a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility which employs over 35 people who are blind or visually impaired to assemble clocks, nylon printer ribbons, dry erase calendars, and more. It has expanded its business into a broad range of markets, including corporate buyers, government entities, office supply distributors, and, most recently, interior designers and architects.

In November 1999, Chicago Lighthouse Industries was awarded a *Manufacturer That Counts Award* from the Chicago Manufacturing Center for its quality products, and its new 18" and 24" Grand Series clocks received a *Best of Show Award* at NeoCon 1999 from Design Journal magazine.

(Continued on next page)

For information on products from Chicago Lighthouse Industries, please contact our customer service department at 800-842-8624.

LIGHTHOUSE KIDS CHAMPION SPECIAL OLYMPICS

The Special Olympics motto is, "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt." This motto kicked off the events on May 24, 2000 at Stegg Field in Chicago, with hundreds of spectators and competitors. Mayor Richard M. Daley honored all the athletes for their hard work, dedication, and will to compete.

The Chicago Lighthouse Development Center for Blind, Multi-Disabled Children participated in the Softball throw competition and 10 and 25 meter assisted walk. Many kids were new to the games, but others have competed for almost a decade. The day was filled with excitement as the children competed intensely to bring home medals.



Congratulations to all of The Lighthouse winners, which include Ian Sturkey, Curtis Sellar, Mike Barakat, Adam Vera, Tommy King, Robert Jones, Calogera Green, Daniel Mic, Arteese Camp, Cherise Stapelton, Eric Pott, Kenneth Sutton, Jose Bueno, Kelly McGowan, Katrice Taylor, Armondo Pasillas, and Justin Owens.

LOOK FOR The official launch of our new web site at www.thechicagolighthouse.org in July 2000 which will include program highlights, news, on-line donations, events and activities, on-line product purchases, and more!

Adult Living Skills Program

Juan began The Chicago Lighthouse Adult Living Skills program when he was 17 years old. In the beginning, he spent most of his days withdrawing from the rest of the class, sitting alone with his head down. At home, he was very dependent on



Julie Bliss, Adult Living Skills teacher (left) working together with Juan during cooking class.

his family to take care of his needs, and at school, teachers had a hard time communicating with him because he only spoke Spanish. But ten years later, Juan has progressed to the most outspoken person in the Adult Living Skills Program.

"I like to call him the 'whirlwind' because he stirs such positive energy throughout the classroom," said Julie Bliss, teacher in the Adult Living Skills Program. This program teaches adults 23 years old and over, who are blind or visually impaired and developmentally delayed, living skills such as cooking, cleaning, personal hygiene, social interaction, and basic academics.

Through the cooking classes, Juan has learned to prepare simple meals at home using his microwave. The program also has given him job responsibilities that he must complete weekly to earn a paycheck. This has improved his skills in counting and money handling. Juan, who now uses English as his primary language, is best friends with everyone in the program, loves to tell jokes, and is often walking through the halls serenading everyone as he passes their offices. "I love my family," said Juan referring to all his friends in the program.

LIGHTHOUSE SUCCESS STORY

GIFTS to The Lighthouse

SECURE A FUTURE FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND THROUGH PLANNED GIFTS

At the Chicago Lighthouse, we rely on many sources of revenue, and planned gifts represent one of the most important vehicles for supporting our programs. When you include The Chicago Lighthouse in your estate plan, you support our programs and secure a future for us to continue to serve children and adults who are blind or visually impaired.

Here are some benefits to giving plans that we hope will make it easier when you consider a gift to The Chicago Lighthouse.

WHAT ARE YOUR BENEFITS?

- Planned Giving offers you the opportunity to determine how your assets are used or distributed through a will.
- Planned Giving allows you to give to The Chicago Lighthouse while retaining fixed amounts for you and/or your loved ones.
- Planned Giving can bring you significant tax advantages, including income, gifts, and estate tax charitable deductions, and, in most cases, avoidance of capital gains tax.
- Planned Giving provides you with an effective way to manage your resources if you make your gift with appreciated securities or real estate.

For further information on Planned Giving and strategies for funding Planned Gifts, consult your financial advisor and contact The Chicago Lighthouse Development Department at (312) 997-3681.

COMING SOON

In July, The Chicago Lighthouse will be announcing a new donor's club for its valued supporters.

Look for more details and information coming soon in the mail and on our web site at www.thechicagolighthouse.org.

THE LIGHTHOUSE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES MAJOR SUPPORTERS OF GALA 2000

EXCLUSIVE AIRLINE SPONSORSHIP: AMERICAN AIRLINES

GALA RECEPTION SPONSORSHIP: McDONALD'S CORPORATION

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Major Donors & Advertisers: The Chicago Lighthouse Board of Directors; CDW Computer Warehouse; Clune Construction Company; Commonwealth Edison; DDB Chicago; Harris Bank; Walgreens; W.W. Grainger.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

NEW ENABLING GARDENS A MUST!

Chicago Botanic Gardens is a luxurious place filled with plants and flowers that we may not be able to encounter on a walk through the city or our neighborhoods. To walk through its 6 acres is like traveling the world, stopping in Japan to see its garden or in England to see its wall of roses. Although, The Buehler Enabling Garden is not bringing you to a specific country, it allows people with all types of disabilities to enjoy the beautiful flowers, plants, trees, and scenery.

When you enter the Enabling Garden, samples of plants, herbs, and flowers are set on a board for people to touch and smell. The board is placed at a level that allows people who use wheelchairs to reach. The paths throughout the garden are designed with multi-color gravel that provides a high contrast between the path and the walls, so that people with visual impairments can navigate safely. As you enter the garden, your nose is filled with scents of tulips, roses, and other exotic flowers. The garden displays a multitude of colors so that a person with low vision can still see the display or pattern of the design. Plant labels and signs are written in large print and are at an accessible height and location, while some signs feature raised letters.

The Enabling Garden will feature an audio tour starting July 2000 and is currently holding classes for people who are blind or visually impaired to garden safely. For more information on the garden and classes, call Kathy Brennan at 847/835-8250.

NEW SOCIAL SECURITY ACT GIVES PEOPLE A CHOICE

On December 17, 1999, the President signed the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act which offers a beneficiary more choice in obtaining rehabilitation or vocational services. This new law removes the barriers that require people with disabilities to choose between health care coverage and work.

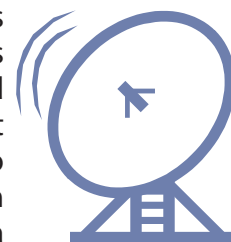
The voluntary program will be phased in nationally over a three-year period beginning January 1, 2001. Social Security and Supplemental Security Income Disability beneficiaries will receive a "Ticket" for use in obtaining vocational rehabilitation, employment,

or other support services from an approved provider of their choice. The law also includes several enhancements to Medicaid and Medicare.

For complete details, contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or www.ssa.gov/work.

FCC PROPOSES NEW REGULATIONS ON DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which regulates programming on television and radio, is proposing this year that all television stations offer audio description on its regular program schedule for at least 60 hours a week. By using the spaces between moments of dialogue, descriptive video provides people with visual impairments a narrated sketch of a program's key visual elements, such as action sequences, settings, or body language.



The FCC has not passed these new regulations due to high costs for these networks which involves a separate audio feed for access by visually impaired viewers. However, since television is moving into a digital mainstream, all stations will most likely have to upgrade their facilities and require several audio feeds per station.

To receive audio description in your home, you need to have only one of the following: (1) a stereo TV with Second Audio Programming (SAP); (2) A VCR with SAP; or (3) a SAP receiver. A TV or VCR purchased in the past five years will most likely obtain SAP. To access SAP on your TV or VCR, enter the Menu Options to adjust settings and select SAP. If a television program is offering descriptive video, it will begin to play.

HOLLYWOOD SPEAKS OUT!

It seems Hollywood is becoming more aware of people who are blind or visually impaired and is lending a hand by recording books on audio cassette. Publishing Mills provides books recorded by several well-known actors such as Ethan Hawke who recorded *Battle Creek* by Scott Lasser. For more information, please contact Publishing Mills at www.pbmills.com.

In this ISSUE . . .

The Chicago Lighthouse awarded \$200,000 grant from Lions Clubs International	1-2
7th Annual Gala Benefit raises over \$250,000 for The Chicago Lighthouse.....	1,3
Career Day Celebration	4
Chicago Lighthouse Industries celebrates 3 millionth clock	4
Benefits of Planned Gifts to The Chicago Lighthouse	6
New Social Security Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act.....	7
Federal Communications Commission proposes new regulations regarding descriptive video.....	7

FOR A COPY OF THIS NEWSLETTER IN LARGE PRINT OR BRAILLE, PLEASE CONTACT NANCY KIM AT 312-666-1331 x3139.

The Chicago Lighthouse Associate Board 13th Annual House & Garden Walk

Enjoy a leisurely day with friends touring four of the North Shore's most beautiful and inviting homes while supporting The Chicago Lighthouse.

Wednesday, June 28, 2000

10am-3pm

\$50.00 Admission

plus \$12 additional for Gourmet Box Lunch

For reservations, call Lynn Muslin, (847) 433-5917.

Reservation deadline, June 21.

No tickets sold on day of event.

Children under 12 and infants not admitted.

Proceeds cover an annual salary for one Birth-to-Three teacher/therapist, and support the operations of the Development Center for Blind, Multi-Disabled Children at The Chicago Lighthouse.



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