IPVI INSIGHTS

Connecting & Supporting Families Whose Children are Visually Impaired, Including Those with Additional Disabilities **NOVEMBER 2017**



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Filiberto Almendarez III

Hello, IPVI members. It's hard to believe we are in November. The leaves are changing and the holidays are right around the corner. It's a time to stay inside and read or exercise outside. We all know, Reading is to the mind what Exercise is to the body. If you choose to stay inside, read. Reading is truly the window to the world. Regardless of sight, blind or visual impairment. Everyone can imagine what they read. It's vision of dreams by virtue of the mind. The more you learn, the more you know, the more places you go. Plus, there are many options to assist with reading. From Braille and Audio Technology to Portable Video Magnifiers, Apps on phones and the possible Finger Reader. You chose your path to reading and travel your mind to unknown adventure. Secondly, if you choose to do physical activities. Play in groups and mix it up with sighted players. It's challenging in a fun way. Like clock work. When my son plays Beep Baseball during this time, I think of IPVI children getting together and playing a friendly game. I also envision parents participating and enjoying time well spent. Just like the Zoo Outing. I stated before, if members would like to gather for a game, please reach out. I keep hoping one day and hope fear is not a factor.. Fear should not stop progress. As parents, we have hoped for the best for our children and "Hope is the only thing stronger than fear".

Let's Play Ball!

Reminder: The Children's Museum Outing is in November. Details are included in the Newsletter. Also, send in your scholarship application for consideration.



Take Care!



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After reading this newsletter, you are probably thinking, "It's the November newsletter, what happened to Thanksgiving?" As hard as I tried, I could not find any articles to help our IPVI families enjoy and include their blind/visually impaired child.

So, I took the time to help you with your Christmas shopping. As a parent who walked the aisles of the toy store and had no idea what to buy, I am really hoping that the information I provided will make Christmas shopping a more pleasant experience. Also, don't pass up the Braille letter from Santa. What joy that will bring to your child.

Joan Bielawski, Newsletter Editor

PLAY FOR ALL

CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE and **IPVI FAMILIES**

A morning of fun for everyone

The Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier 700 E. Grand Avenue, Suite 127 Chicago, IL 60611

Saturday, November 11, 2017

Pre-registered families 9:00 - 1:00 General public 10:00 - 1:00+

To register or for more information, please contact: Gail Patterson at the Chicago Lighthouse -(312) 997-3695

Pre-registration includes:

Free admission for Chicago Lighthouse & IPVI Families Free shuttle from the Chicago Lighthouse to Navy Pier First 50 people only!!!

If leaving from Chicago Lighthouse, please arrive at 8:30am.



IPVI'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND

arships For students who are blind or visually impaired

Any individual intending to continue his/her education at a college, university or trade school and is interested in being considered for the IPVISF, must meet the following criteria: Illinois resident, blind or visually impaired, undergraduate or graduate student, and an IPVI member.

The candidate's application is processed free of charge. The student must mail or email a written request to receive a copy of the application from IPVI. Then the student must complete the IPVISF Application Form, provide 3 completed Reference Forms, submit medical records or a letter from the vision specialist confirming the condition, and mail them to IPVI. The applicant may attach a 1-page resume of clubs, offices held, or any other pertinent information concerning his/her activity record.

The IPVI Board of Directors will review all scholarship applications and select the winner. IPVI reserves the right to announce such award in its newsletters and marketing materials.

The IPVISF is funded completely from tax-deductible donations from individuals, companies and corporations who support IPVI's goals. Any individuals or groups wishing to donate to this fund, please forward your tax-deductible donations to IPVI. Thank you for your continued support of IPVI.

To request a scholarship application, please contact the Board of Directors at: P.O. Box 316634, Chicago, IL 60631.





To the Special Needs Family Who Just Can't Do Christmas This Year By Amber Bobnar

Here's a message for all the parents of special needs kids who just can't manage the Christmas traditions and stress: It's OK. Skip it. READ MORE at: **WonderBaby.org**



Santa's Little Hackers: Free Adapted Toys For Kids With Disabilities

http://www.santaslittlehackers.com

Santa's Little Hackers is a seasonal toy drive to adapt toys. They make simple modifications to the electronics of toys and give them away. READ MORE at: **WonderBaby.org**



The One Question I Can't Answer As a Special Needs Mom During the Holidays By Nicole Feeneyi

I hate the holidays! Do you still want to keep reading? READ MORE at: WonderBaby.org



The WonderBaby Holiday Survival Guide For Kids With Sensory Impairments By Mary McDonach

Have you ever thought about what Christmas must be like to a blind or visually impaired child? Think of all the decorations, scents, songs, and sounds associated with the holidays. Will all this change be exciting or overwhelming for your child? READ MORE at: **WonderBaby.org**

At the top of the website page, click on All Topics and then click on Holiday Crafts and Ideas.



RECOMMENDED BY WONDERBABY

For 🕇 Baloies



Chicco Musical Roller

Rollers are GREAT therapeutic toys!



Playskool Listen-Up Rounds

These balls are a great way to introduce new textures and sounds to your baby.

Hasbro Playskool Lullaby Gloworm

It has a soft body and plastic face and plays very nice and soothing songs.





Vtech Move & Crawl Ball

This self-rolling ball encourages your child to move!

Lamaze Octotunes

Each leg on the octopus plays different note а when squeezed in a very airy and natural sound.



For 🛪 Toddlers 🛪 Younger



VTech Rhyme and Discover Book

Turn the page to hear a silly giggle and familiar nursery rhymes.

Sesame Street and Arthur DVD's



scriptive video. Prince Lionheart Wheely Bug, Pig,

and Mouse

This scooter is great for teaching balance.

VTech Strum and Jam Kidi Musical Guitar Band



You can play guitar, piano and drums in this one versatile tou.

Sing-Along CD Player

The buttons on this CD player are easu to push and each is differentiated by a raised symbol so they're a snap to find.



Sensory 🛪 Toys

Touch, Feel, & Match Tactile Board



Each peg has a unique texture and is matched with a hole with the same texture.

Little Tikes Discover Sounds Hammer This hammer makes all sorts of





it.

Moon Sand

This is a scribble toy that plays music as your child draws.

Toys 🛪 For 🛪 Older Kids

SweetP3 2 GB MP3 Player

This MP3 player is designed for young children, which means that it has a very simple interface and is very easy to use.



Bounty Hunter TK4 Tracker IV **Metal Detector**



A fun game for the beach 河 or just out in the back yard, this metal detector will turn uour child into a

treasure hunter.

Talking Solar System

Tactile educational toy. The 👝 planets revolve around the 💽 sun and the unit talks to you, naming each of the planets.





For grades I-6, the Turbo Twist Math is fun, fast-paced, educational... and totally accessible!

Luric Identifluer

Pop the sound card into the small and compact Identiflyer then press the buttons. You'll hear real recordings of birds from all over the countru.



Video Ă Games

7-128 Software



This company specializes in educational video games for blind and visually impaired children, and their software works with both Windows and Macs.

THESE TOYS ARE FOUND ON WONDERBABY WEB-SITE.

http://www.wonderbaby.org/ articles/best-christmas-tous-blindchildren

Find more toys by searching Christmas Tous for Children Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired.



Santa reads braille

Santa's Workshop will be open on November 24th

LETTERS FROM SANTA CLAUS IN BRAILLE

The Christmas Season reminds us to be grateful. Grateful for family and friends; grateful for good health; grateful for food and shelter; grateful for the celebration of the birth of Christ.

"Why Braille Letters from Santa?" We simply wanted to do something special for kids at Christmas, that's it. If you have kids of your own, you already know Christmas is magical and everyone deserves to feel it. We'd love to shatter the notion that only 'seeing is believing' and help bring to life the idea that every child deserves a letter from Santa Claus. Everyone can feel the spirit of Christmas and sometimes, it takes more than seeing to believe.

Here at Braille Works we also understand the fun side of Christmas. Santa and his elves; flying reindeer; stockings hung by the chimney and a host of other traditions. These are wondrous things that bring smiles and laughter to children around the world. In fulfilling our mission toward "*Making the World a More Readable Place*TM", we're bringing 'Letters from Santa' to children who are blind or visually impaired. It's our desire to bring a little more of that Christmas wonder to your child and give him, or her, an opportunity to hear from Santa. At the same time; letting them know that Santa reads braille is a great way to encourage them to develop their braille reading skills.

We would love to hear from you and send your child a braille letter from Santa. We are asking that only families who have a child who is blind or visually impaired take part. Teachers of students who read braille are also encouraged to submit requests.

Thank you for taking part in Santa Reads Braille and have a blessed Christmas Season.

https://brailleworks.com/santa-reads-braille/



IPVI INSIGHTS

REPRINTED FROM FAMILY CONNECT WEBSITE



THE PERFECT DAY By Emily Coleman

I have written many times about the benefit of recreation for our son, Eddie, and for kids like him. I've talked about exposure to activities so he can simply learn how to have fun. Recently, we went on a family bike ride with our close friends, and the benefits were even more than we expected.

We live in the Pacific Northwest, and we've heard many rave reviews about the Hiawatha trail. It's a bike ride on the Montana/Idaho border that follows an old train route. It goes through tunnels, over train trestles, and the entire path is downhill. Based on the "downhill" part, we knew it could be a good fit for Eddie... and if I'm being honest, for me too.

We loaded up the bike we received from the NW Association for Blind Athletes and the Pacific Foundation for Blind Children, packed ample snacks, and embarked on our adventure. Eddie enjoyed the 15-mile ride, and many people stopped to ask questions about his cool bike. He really loved the tunnels and would call out to hear the different echo sounds.

I loved being outside with our family and with our friends. I loved feeling like all the other families on the trail, spending time with our kids, and making memories. I was reminded that we can get out and have adventures and that the biggest thing holding us back is us. When picking family outings, we simply need to ask, "How will we include Eddie?" We need to stop asking, "Should we include Eddie?"

Affirmation of this thought came not in the bike ride or the fun group lunch we had afterward. Affirmation actually came during the car ride home. Eddie was sitting in the back seat of our pick-up, and I heard his younger sister, CC, talking to him. What caught my attention was not that CC was talking because that happens all the time; I was surprised because she was talking to Eddie, and Eddie was responding.

CC wanted to sing some songs, and she was asking Eddie which ones. When she got the verse wrong, he corrected her, and she paid attention to him. She started singing songs that required two people to participate, and Eddie joined right in.

I forgot that the greatest benefit of including our kids with special needs is that other kids see them as equals. Even their own siblings. After spending a day riding bikes with Eddie, CC saw him as capable. Not only as a recreation partner but as somebody to play with in the car. As her equal.

You might think that this would come naturally for siblings, but it doesn't work that way for us. Yes, there are moments, and those moments literally stop time. As CC and Eddie played in the backseat, James and I locked eyes and smiled... and it felt like the perfect day.

IPVI

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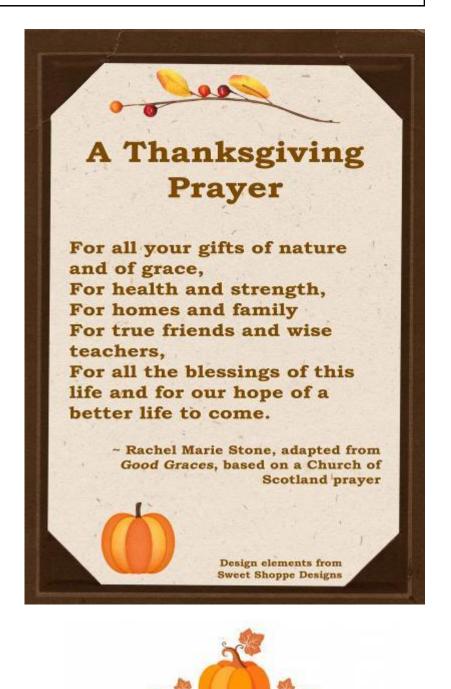
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IPVI INSIGHTS



Join IPVI or renew your membership today!

The Illinois Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments is a state-wide, nonprofit organization that enables parents to find information and resources for their children who are blind or visually impaired, including those with additional disabilities.

Your IPVI membership dues or generous contributions help to support all of our ongoing efforts:

- Regular communications which include: workshops, conferences, training seminars, legislative issues, organizational announcements, products, and advice about raising a child who is visually impaired.
- Offers several \$500 college scholarships each year.
- Publishes a resource catalog which includes anything and everything to do with visual impairment.
- Conducts training and support sessions where parents share experiences and ideas.
- Holds fun outings adapted for children with visual impairments at athletic, cultural, educational, and entertainment settings.
- Represents parents of children with visual impairments at conferences, public hearings, and on committees.

Check	one:
	1 -

□ Parent/Guardian Membership: \$15 per year. Child(ren)'s Names):_____

Birthdate(s) of my visually impaired child(ren):

My child(ren)'s eye con	
□I give my permission to relea	use my name to other parents.
Group/Agency Membership	p \$50 per year.
Extended Family/Friend As	ssoc. Membership \$15/year.
□ Medical Specialist \$50 per ye	ear.
□ Scholarship Fund \$10.00	
Donation: \$	_ (tax deductible)
New Membership	
Name:	
Address:	
City:	_ State: Zip:
Phone: ()	
Email:	
Please enclose this form alon	g with your payment by check to

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What does IPVI do?

- Promotes and provides information through meetings, correspondence, publications, etc., which will help parents meet the special needs of their children with visual impairments.
- Facilitates the sharing of experiences and concerns in order to provide emotional support and relief from feelings of isolation for parents and their families.
- Creates a climate of opportunity for children who are blind in the home, school, and society.
- Fosters communication and coordination of services among federal, state, and local agencies and organizations involved with providing services to people who are visually impaired.
- Advocates on a statewide level for services to children who are visually impaired and their families.
- Keeps members informed about current proposals and actions which impact on children with visual impairments and their families.

Have questions or need more information? Call us at 1-773-882-1331 Illinois Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments P. O. Box 316634 Chicago, IL 60631

IDVI CALENDAR

▶ 11/11

LIGHTHOUSE/IPVI PLAY FOR ALL

Chicago

Please call 1-773-882-1331 for any questions, concerns, or comments that IPVI can help you with.

Newsletter Deadline for December 2017 is November 15



Calendar of Events! News and Updates! Useful Links to Web Sites! And more...