ABVI Expands OT Services

“Doctor, I’m unable to concentrate. I can’t work and not being able to drive is depressing,” the man said.

Acknowledging his distress after hearing about the injury that caused the man’s complete vision loss in one eye, ABVI’s Low Vision doctor continued with the low vision evaluation.

“I’m embarrassed to eat in front of people. I knock over glasses at the table. I don’t go out with friends anymore,” the man continued. “And, I’m nowhere near as coordinated as I use to be. I’ll reach out for something that I think is right in front of me, and it’s like I am grabbing on to thin air. There’s nothing there.”

The eye doctor recommended that the man meet with ABVI’s occupational therapist for services. The doctor hoped that the services would empower the man to use his remaining vision to overcome the challenges of daily life vision loss posed.

ABVI’s Occupational Therapy (OT) services are a new service offering for the organization. According to Katherine White, O.D. of ABVI’s Low Vision services, the OT services will allow ABVI to “reach more individuals who find vision loss to be traumatic and disorienting.”

“Occupational Therapy expands ABVI’s services to include individuals who are visually impaired and have difficulty completing everyday tasks,” says Dr. White.

The Lavelle Fund for the Blind has funded education and equipment to launch the two OT programs – the Neurologic Vision Rehabilitation Program (NVRP) and the Eccentric Occupational Therapy services example

Continued on page 2.
Holiday Party Brings Smiles to Many Faces

by Sarah Favro
Foundation and Corporate Giving Manager

On Saturday, December 5 2015, when the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABVI) is normally dark and quiet, holiday lights were twinkling and children’s laughter filled the halls of the Vision Rehabilitation Center!

The children’s holiday party is one way our donors and friends are making a difference. Twelve families enjoyed the festivities. The sisters of the Delta Gamma sorority again led the activities for the children and the ABVI Vision Rehabilitation staff facilitated a support group for the parents. While the children were decorating cookies, making paper snowflakes, and playing games, the parents were learning more about ABVI’s programming and connecting with other parents of children with visual impairments.

What’s a holiday party without presents? At the conclusion of the party, each child received a gift, which was generously donated by the Irondequoit Lions Club.

The halls of ABVI are quiet again, but the joy and learning continues far into 2016 as other events are carried out. Together, we are building a foundation and creating a future for children with vision loss.

We would like to thank the following donors for their commitment and generosity to our programs for children who are blind or visually impaired and their families: 3M Foundation, Fred & Floy Willmott Foundation, Kohl’s Department Stores, and Rochester Female Charitable Society.

ABVI Launches OT Services, continued

Viewing Training Program (EVTP).

“The NVRP is for people who have a loss of vision due to an injury to the brain, like a stroke or traumatic brain injury,” says Loreyn Hansen, OTR/L, ABVI’s Occupational Therapist. “The EVTP is for individuals who have a blind spot in their center vision.” She has worked with several individuals since the launch of the services, helping them to build up endurance with activities, begin to adapt to the changes in their vision, and growing confidence.

“By the conclusion of therapy,” Loreyn said of the man the eye doctor recommended see her, “he happily said he could reach across a table without knocking things over. He was again able to enjoy his weekly coffee at the local diner with his friends.” He was able to read and return to work after the therapy, feeling like his “old self” again.

“On the last day of therapy, he said ‘I was lost in the dark and needed to find my way back when I started this. ABVI’s OT services was the light that helped me do it’,” says Loreyn.

To learn more about ABVI’s OT services, call ABVI’s Low Vision Center at (585) 697-5736 or talk to your eye doctor about a referral to ABVI.
Our Wish List

The kindness and generosity of our donors help us to offer the best and most up-to-date services possible. The following is a list of much needed items that are not covered by ABVI and Goodwill of the Finger Lakes' budget. To donate funds to purchase any of these items, or to donate the items themselves, please contact Marlisa Post, at mpost@abvi-goodwill.com or (585) 697-5713.

Two Zimmerman Low Vision Simulation Kits: $300 each
These kits contain a variety of lenses that simulate an array of vision conditions. With the goggles and lenses, sighted individuals are able to “see” what someone with macular degeneration, cataracts, stroke, etc. sees. Our Vision Rehabilitation staff use these simulators when providing presentations and trainings for our community as well as with family members. These simulators give sighted individuals a glimpse into the challenges those with vision loss face as they strive to live each day to the fullest.

Books and DVDs for Family Resource Center: $25 – $200
Our Family resource Center is a comfortable and cozy place where families of children who are blind or visually impaired can access information specific to the needs of their child, as well as have a quiet family-friendly place to meet with our Vision Rehabilitation staff for support.

Braille Paper for our Multi-Media Center: $800
Our Multi-Media Center is located at our main campus in Rochester, but people who are blind or visually impaired from around the world can access this very special service. Our dedicated group of Braille transcribers volunteer their time to create materials in Braille such as utility bills, restaurant menus, and entire books. Even though individuals can access a wealth of information through current technology, Braille remains the only form of literacy for those who are unable to see regular or large print. It is truly the window to the world!

Rugged iPad Case: $90
An iPad has been a wonderful addition to our children’s programming. The iPad is in need of a rugged case to protect it from drops, water, sand, and all of the other messy things that children use. This case would even allow the iPad to be used outside in our new outdoor area, the Exploration Station!

Examination Equipment for Project Eye Care
Project Eye Care is one of our outreach programs that provides eye exams and glasses free of charge for adults in our community who lack appropriate health insurance. The following items are needed in order for our volunteer eye doctors to provide the most efficient eye exams for those who turn to this program for support.
– Lenses to be used during dilated eye exams: $750 (3 lenses at $250 each)
– A slit lamp: $7,000

Wegmans or Tops Gift Cards
Throughout the year, we provide a variety of recreation events for children who are blind or visually impaired. These gift cards help to provide refreshments and other items that are used at programs such as holiday parties, day camps, summer picnics, and much, much more.

We would like to thank the following individuals who have made our wishes come true since April 2015:
Alan R. Saiger
Ann Castle
David J. Cole
Geri Prescott
John Houck
Nancee Sanders
Phillip Gelsomino
Donor Profile: Barbara Marshall

by Tracy Schleyer, CFRE
VP of Development

Barbara met Bruce Marshall while in college at SUNY Farmingdale. They married, and after college Bruce went to work in the mechanical contracting business in Rochester at Ancoma, Inc. He spent his 30-year career there.

In 1997, the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired became one of Bruce’s customers when Vision Rehabilitation services expanded out of our manufacturing building into its own Center. While working with ABVI, Bruce got to see the wonderful services we provide to those in our community who are blind. In addition to providing the new Vision Rehabilitation Center with heating and air-conditioning, he decided to help by contributing funds to ABVI.

Bruce passed away in 2007. Barbara knew that Bruce felt strongly about supporting ABVI’s mission, and she continues their tradition of making a contribution every year. She also donates clothing and items to Goodwill to support our programs and services.

When Bruce was ill, many people helped him. Barbara knows how important it is to help others. In addition to financially supporting ABVI, she gives to a number of other organizations that are dear to her and Bruce’s hearts and she volunteers her time to help others. She has received a philanthropy award from Rochester General Hospital Foundation and a volunteer award from the Lipson Cancer Center.

When not volunteering, Barbara spends her time with her children and grandchildren, skiing, and playing tennis and paddle ball.

Barbara has visited ABVI a couple of times in the past few years. “It’s nice to see the amazing things that you do there.” She gets satisfaction in her giving to ABVI. “As you get older, you realize you have a lot to give. You think about how you can help others.”

On behalf of those we serve – Barbara, we thank you for helping us deliver much needed services with your contributions.
ABVI Names Tee Boon Employee of the Year

David Tee Boon has worked for the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABVI) for 30 years. He has grown from a young man just learning what it meant to be in a work place to a mature individual who demonstrates pride in his work and loves to talk about it whenever the opportunity arises.

When David first started with ABVI, he had a similar attitude many of his peers just starting in the workforce – David was not always happy to be at his job and usually avoided talking with colleagues. He preferred to stick to one job and was not always flexible in learning new jobs. As a young man just entering the workforce, David was focused on doing well at his assigned task and he worried that he would not be successful in new positions.

Over the 30 years he has been with ABVI, David has transformed into one of the organization’s hardest working employees and is well known throughout the agency as a person who laughs and talks with everyone. Once David understood that he could be successful in new situations, he gladly took to new jobs like a fish to water. He is willing to do whatever job he is needed to do, especially if asked to switch from making easel pads to dispensing self-stick flags.

David is a natural born storyteller. This fact has played a part in one of David’s greatest accomplishments – being an ambassador for our mission during agency tours. Every person who goes on a tour of ABVI stops by to talk to him as he does his job assembling self-stick easel pads.

“David truly represents what ABVI’s mission is about. Every day he comes to work with a positive attitude and a willingness to do his best,” says Gidget Hopf, ABVI President and CEO.

DRINK LOCAL.
GIVE LOCAL.

From April 1 to June 30 when you & your friends order up a beer flight* at the Brew House tasting bar, the proceeds support ABVI thanks to the Genesee Brew House Charity Program.

*A beer flight contains four, two ounce samples of draft beers made by the Genesee Brewing Team. Each flight costs $2, with most of the fee going toward local non-profit organizations like ABVI.

Always drink responsibly.
A memorial or honorary gift is a wonderful way to celebrate special occasions, honor a loved one, or pay tribute to the memory of family members or friends. Many generous people have found a way to express their caring spirit while helping to ensure the success of ABVI. As a thank you for your gift, ABVI will list your name and the names of those who you are honoring in our newsletter. We’ll also send a note acknowledging your gift according to your wishes. For more information about making a memorial or honorary gift donation, please contact ABVI’s Development Department at (585) 697-5711. Thank you to the following friends who have made tribute contributions from November 1, 2015 through January 31, 2016.

### HONORARIUMS

**In honor of Matt Alexander**  
Timothy and Karen Bancroft

**In honor of John L. Bonn**  
Gerald Manioci, Esq.

**In honor of Debra Calandrillo**  
Tracy Schleyer

**In honor of Michael Frame**  
Scott Frame

**In honor of Eileen Kissel**  
Jeffrey Kissel

**In honor of Dilas Lago**  
Joseph Avery and Patricia Lago-Avery

**In honor of Jennifer Lake**  
Jane Milholland

**In honor of Joseph Mangione’s 90th birthday**  
Nancy M. Pollatta

**In honor of Ronald R. Reed**  
Therese M. Farugia, O.D.

**In honor of Gerard and Susan Rooney**  
William and Melissa Head  
Elizabeth Ciaccio  
Kate and Tibor Torok  
Maya Temperley

**In honor of Beni Schemm**  
Joseph Avery and Patricia Lago-Avery

**In honor of Tracy Schleyer**  
Linda L. Dolmatch

**In honor of Gwen K. Sterns, M.D.**  
Susan N. Rosenthal, M.D.

**In honor of Oliver Williams**  
Shirley G. Williams

### MEMORIALS

**In memory of Muriel Ackroyd**  
Anne V. Wolf

**In memory of Ann M. Ahlheim**  
Wendy Ahlheim  
Ian Knowles  
Ann and Donald MacKay

**In memory of Howard Bardeen**  
Nancy Premo  
Howard and Kathryn Bardeen  
Jean and Floyd Cummings  
Herbert and Helene Witzmann  
Thomas P. Ross  
Robert Premo  
Anthony Lodice  
James and Jessie Lauricella  
Margaret and Joseph Ruffing  
Virginia Palmer  
Thomas Lamendola  
Frank and Josephine Bardeen

**In memory of Thomas I. Boak**  
Judith and Norman Karsten

**In memory of James T. Briggs**  
David and Lisa Trimble

**In memory of Catherine Carnes**  
Sally Shiffer

**In memory of Leo J. Dodd**  
Harvey and Elaine Nusbaum

**In memory of Elizabeth C. Duffy**  
Patricia and David Pogue

**In memory of Eli Eckman**  
Karen M. Schuhle-Williams

**In memory of Ruth Etter**  
David and Virginia Rice

**In memory of Madeline Flanigan**  
Gregory Perkins

**In memory of Nancy Fox**  
Leslie Pacer - Pearle Vision

**In memory of Leonard Haas**  
Debra Saltz  
Karyne Edwards  
Richard Haas  
Robert Haas

**In memory of Harvey Holderle**  
Nancy H. Pearce

**In memory of Luther Michelson**  
Paul and June DiClementine

**In memory of Frank and Terese Pesesky**  
Jane E. Kennedy

**In memory of Jane Ramsey**  
Positive Management Leadership, Inc.

**In memory of Daniel D. Rothfuss**  
Janet Rothfuss

Continued on next page.
IRA donation helps ABVI & is a Tax Savings

by Tracy Schleyer, CFRE
VP of Development

Did you know you can make a gift from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to help support the services of ABVI and enjoy tax savings as well?! If you are 70 ½ or older a gift made directly from your IRA will count toward your required minimum distribution and not be reportable as taxable income. You can lower the taxes you pay while helping those who are blind or visually impaired.

Your retirement plan is a way of financially securing your future. However, IRA’s are subject to income and estate taxes. But taxes can be avoided or reduced if you donate some or all of your IRA distribution. You will then avoid paying income tax on the money that is required to take out of your IRA each year. It is simple to make a donation from your IRA.

The benefits are considerable:

– Your charitable distribution counts toward your IRA minimum required distribution

– The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so even those who do not itemize their tax returns can receive the benefit!

– The gratification that your gift will help those in our community who are blind or visually impaired.

To learn more about making a contribution from your IRA, please contact Tracy at (585) 697-5780 or tschleyer@abvi-goodwill.com.

Thank You

… if you have included the Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired as a beneficiary in your will or of your retirement or insurance assets.

Your thoughtful gift will help those who are blind or visually impaired for generations to come, and we want to thank you and welcome you into our Foresight Circle!

Please let us know

Contact Tracy Schleyer, Vice President of Development – (585) 697-5780
tschleyer@abvi-goodwill.com
Join us on Saturday, April 9, 2016 as we honor Steven E. Feldon, M.D., M.B.A. Director, Flaum Eye Institute, with our Visionary Award.

The evening will showcase the empowering spirit of ABVI!

Call (585) 697-5711 for more information.