Artist’s Vision Takes Flight, Lands at ABVI

In 2012, a commercial fisherman-turned-artist had a vision. His vision directed his hands and he went to work crafting a bald eagle out of timber. His goal was to share this art with people who are blind.

Today, that vision has become a reality. North, the sculpture created by artist Lee Phillips, flew across the country and has come to rest in his new eyrie (nest) at ABVI, some 2,800 miles from Eastsound, on Orcas Island in the state of Washington State where he was born.

North was born from a three-foot diameter piece of old-growth western red cedar Lee reclaimed off the coast of British Columbia. Lee’s friendship with a neighbor who has Multiple Sclerosis that has impaired motor skills, caused him to go deaf, and impacted his sight, inspired him to transform the wood into something more meaningful.

“Lee closes his eyes a lot to better visualize. North became a quest to be gifted to ABVI through Lee’s closed eyes and open heart,” says Lee’s wife Suzie.

The quest to find North’s permanent home began with an Internet search. Suzie landed on ABVI’s website and liked what she saw. She reached out to Tracy Schleyer, ABVI’s Vice President of Development.

“I was extremely moved by the gesture. When I first saw North, I was in awe. Lee’s caring artistry is genuinely touching,” says Tracy.

Lee and Suzie joined ABVI via a streaming Internet app during a special ceremony to welcome North to the agency, making the vision a reality in their eyes as well.
In January, NFL Hall of Famer Jim Kelly’s Kelly for Kids Foundation presented a donation to support ABVI’s Early Vision Screening Program to Development Manager Sarah Favro and Vision Wellness and Preventive Services Coordinator Kimberly Lawrence.

“We want to thank our newest partner, the Kelly for Kids Foundation, for their generous gift. It will change the lives of children in the Greater Rochester area by empowering their parents with the ability to identify potential issues that could cause vision loss or blindness and begin to handle them,” said Sarah.

Since 2010, ABVI’s Early Vision Screening program has been identifying possible vision issues in children from six months to five years old. The screenings are conducted using state-of-the-art equipment and take place at ABC Head Start programs and childcare centers in Monroe County. For those children who fail the screening, the program staff helps facilitate an eye exam by an eye doctor. This vital program has saved the sight of many children in our community!

The Kelly for Kids Foundation, started by former Buffalo Bills quarterback and NFL Hall of Famer Jim Kelly, supports organizations that serve disabled and disadvantaged children in Western New York. In total, the foundation has distributed almost $4 million to agencies in Buffalo and Rochester.

When Bill and Judy Davis’s son Scott was born with a rare eye condition that left him blind, they sought support and found it in a group of parents with children similar to Scott. The family first became involved with ABVI when the parent group started meeting at the main location and held holiday parties in the café. They then became donors. And their son has been an employee at ABVI for the past 20 years.

“We give to ABVI because we know how we and other families struggled to get help for our children and we hope the money we contribute to ABVI will help continue funding children’s programs and services,” says Judy.

Bill and Judy are also members of the Irondequoit Lions Club and have become advocates within the club for donating to ABVI’s Low Vision Clinic and Children’s programs.

Their advocacy also extends to the stage. As a result of their efforts, in partnership with the Auditorium Theatre, the Irondequoit, Walworth and Churchville Lions clubs, and the Rochester Broadway Theatre League, Judy and Scott were able to secure initial funding from Simcon Electronics for audio description of theatrical productions that continue to this day. “All in all, the work that Scott and I (and also Bill) did was well worth it,” says Judy.
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's budget. To donate funds to purchase any of these items, or to donate the items themselves, please contact Tracy Schleyer, CFRE, at tschleyer@abvi-goodwill.com or (585) 697-5780.

**iPad security locks: $100/each**
These locks and tethers would allow us to still instruct the people we serve on the latest technology while keeping the devices secured.

**3 copies of the software program Talking Typer: $89/each**
This computer training program includes drills, practice, and typing games that assist those who are blind or visually impaired as they develop computer skills essential for work or for daily tasks.

**Digital subscription to the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle: $156**
This resource would allow Career Development Specialists to stay current on area employers, employment opportunities as well as local labor trends.

**Nikon D3000 Digital SLR Camera: $329**
This camera would allow our staff to capture moments from recreation programs and document and share the work that we do.

**iPad Mini Wi-Fi 16GB: $329**
This is the newest iPad product from Apple. With this, we can demonstrate the most up-to-date technologies for those we serve.

**Mac Mini with OS X Server: $999**
This server would enable us to configure the devices we use for programs like TechBridge on a single account, allowing us to operate more efficiently at a lower cost.

**CCTV with Optical Character Recognition (OCR): $3,500**
This adaptive technology allows employees who are blind to still read hard copies of documents that they encounter in the course of their work. A high-definition (HD) camera is connected to a monitor with a movable table. The Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software then reads the document aloud to the employee.

**New examination stool with a back for Project Eye Care staff: $400**

**Printer and toner for Contact Center Annex Space: $405**
Did you know that ABVI & Goodwill of the Finger Lakes has a Contact Center? Through our partnerships with entities like the Environmental Protection Agency, NYS Department of Labor, the Veterans Administration, and our regional operation of the 2-1-1/LIFE LINE program, we provide much-needed information and referrals while also creating job opportunities to those who are blind or visually impaired. And it's been such a success that we've opened up a new space! These employees need a new printer so they can provide reports required for their work.

**A “dorm-size” Refrigerator: $253**
Many staff members in our Contact Center are blind or visually impaired. This can sometimes make it challenging to leave campus to get lunch. While our Loop café is a great option for all staff, some people prefer to bring their lunch. This small refrigerator would allow the Contact Center Annex staff to keep their lunch cold and easily accessible.
This spring join us as

A Garden Grows

At The ABVI Visionary Gala

hosted by Macy's

Saturday, April 5
2014

Hyatt Regency
Rochester

For more information, please call Debra at (585) 697-5711 or e-mail dcalandrillo@abvi-goodwill.com.
“The most fun we’ve had at a fundraising event in a very long time!”
– 2013 Visionary Gala attendee

Come See How Our Garden Grows at the Visionary Gala!

This year “A Garden Grows” at the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired’s (ABVI) annual Visionary Gala, hosted by Macy’s. On Saturday, April 5th at the Hyatt Regency Rochester, guests will stroll through a festive garden featuring live and silent auctions, raffles, live jazz music, gourmet hors d’oeuvres, and cocktails.

The evening will showcase the power of ABVI’s mission, and how the seeds of independence blossom into a bright future!

A Garden Grows at the ABVI Visionary Gala hosted by Macy’s wishes to thank WXXI’s Evan Dawson for being this year’s Master of Ceremonies.

To see a complete list of our generous sponsors for this year’s event, please visit www.SeeGreatThings.com and click on the Ways to Help drop down menu to select ABVI’s Visionary Gala.
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) 697-5713.

Thank you to the following friends who have made contributions from October 1, 2013 through January 31, 2014.

**In honor of Allison Ford Abbamonte**
Genevieve Bastuk

**In honor of ABVI and Goodwill Employees**
Gidget and John Hopf

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

**In memory of Eleanor Affleck**
Kathleen Affleck

**In memory of Ann M. Ahlheim**
Rosemary C. Bachman
David and Ellen Bennett

**In honor of Matt Alexander**
Mr. and Mrs. Tim J. Bancroft

**In honor of Janie Baker**
Roy Redfield

**In memory of Francis E. Bonn**
Eleanor F. Breen
Tom D’Aurizio
Kathryn and Peter Fiorentino
Barbara Mullin

**In honor of Lauri Bradstreet**
Roy Redfield

**In memory of Thomas P. Bresnahan**
Ceidlen Beller

**In memory of James T. Briggs**
Peter Briggs
John and Lindsay Garrett

**In memory of Patricia Byrne**
Ann C. Gallagher
Ray and Karen Gates

**In memory of Yvonne Cuvuto**
Timothy and Lori Giarrusso

**In memory of Marie Spangler Copeland**
Timothy and Lori Giarrusso

**In memory of Linda B. Crawford**
Suzanne Spelman

**In memory of Catherine L. Crowley**
Elaine M. Batterby

**In memory of Mack Dixon**
Timothy and Lori Giarrusso

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

**In memory of Marion Eldridge**
Sandra and James Dugan
Leo J. Dugan
Trudy and Daniel Haseley
Steve Howcroft
Virgil and May Johanningsmeier
Richard and Sandra Moncrief
Gerald and Diana Roethel

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

**In memory of John Falvo**
Barbara A. Palmeri

**In memory of Katherine Fischer**
Brookside Elementary School
Sunshine Club

**In memory of Thomas and Madeline Gibbons**
Thomas Gibbons

**In honor of Ernest G. Guillet**
Barbara A. Jones

**In honor of Henry Sykes**
Raymond and Patricia Naber

**In memory of Margaret Hopkins**
Mary Louise Kuntz

**In memory of Shanell Johnson**
Timothy and Lori Giarrusso
Gidget and John Hopf
Marlisa Post
Tracy L. Schleyer

**In memory of Phyllis Keegan**
Cynthia A. Gleichauf

**In memory of Florence Kerr**
Kathy and Chet Bloden

**In memory of Elaine Lawrence**
Timothy and Lori Giarrusso

**In honor of Mary Ellen Lessord**
Constance W. Durfee
Turn Your Annual Contribution Into A Legacy

As you plan for family and loved ones, you might also consider the charitable organizations you most value, such as ABVI. One way to meet your personal philanthropic goals and ensure the future of ABVI is by making a gift to our endowment fund.

It’s simple and easy.
ABVI’s endowment fund allocates certain contributions to an investment portfolio—a carefully managed and monitored portfolio of investments where a portion of the return helps fund programs and services for people who are blind or visually impaired. The principal remains safely invested to perpetuate the fund and, consequently, the stream of support so important to serving people who are blind or visually impaired.

Some simple math.
Suppose you would like to make sure that ABVI receives $500 every year, even after your lifetime. To calculate the amount you need to donate to perpetuate your annual gift, divide that amount by 5 percent (the rate at which the agency currently draws on its endowment) to arrive at $10,000. By contributing or bequeathing $10,000 to ABVI’s endowment, you continue indefinitely donating $500 annually.

For more information on ABVI’s endowment, contact Tracy Schleyer, CFRE, Vice President of Development at (585) 697-5780 or tschleyer@abvi-goodwill.com.

In memory of Jarret J. Lobb
American Association for Cancer Research
W.N. and E.C. Ball
David and Sue Beddow
Carolyn and Sam Bick
Charles Brickman
Patricia and Terry Browne
Leonard and Germaine Chaput
Katherine Couric
Kathleen C. Daly
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Frank and Joey Gilmore
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Ann Haefele
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Gidget and John Hopf
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John and Karen Schiess
Kenneth and Betty Schirmuly
Denise Siciliano
Linda Strauss
Rudolph and Margaret Warren
Seymour and Myrna Weinstein
Barbara Wolf

In memory of Robert McClelland
Lindsay McClelland

In honor of Brian A. McLaughlin
Constance Valk

In memory of Luther and Rosalia Michaelson
Paul and June DiClementine

In memory of Nancy B. Morey
Booker W. Morey

In memory of Marion W. Neun
Mary Ellen and Peter Parry

In memory of Mary Jane Perry
Douglas and Marianne Taylor

In honor of Marjorie D. Rose
Jean and Richard Stowell

In memory of Charlotte R. Russell
David and Joanne Poland

In memory of Mary Sue Schaefer
Red Wing Shoe Store

In memory of Robert Schmitt
Gina and Bill Reger
Paula Schmitt

In honor of Sharon Schwalm
Roy Redfield

In memory of Michelina “Mickey” C. Vassallo
Joseph C. Ange, Jr.
Linda P. Clement and Joseph Clement, III
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Norma and Patrick Hunt
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Mary M. McElduff
Jon and Susan McNally
O’Connell Electric Company
Elizabeth Pollock
Swanda Reddington
Paula L. Stearns
David and Mary Uetz
Ann D. Weintraub

In honor of Virginia Riley
Carolyn Riley

In memory of Vivian Wallace
Ann Thaney

In honor of James Winchester
Lynn Kinsman

In memory of Dorothy Wolfe
Wayne W. Wolfe

In memory of Anne H. Yanicky
Suzanne and Bernard Ernst
Denise Kolerski
Looking for another way to give to ABVI?

Donate your car, truck, motorcycle, boat, or other vehicle to ABVI’s Vehicle Donation Program. It’s quick and it’s easy! You will receive tax benefits and help support our vital mission.

To view an informative video and learn more about ABVI’s Vehicle Donation Program, please visit www.SeeGreatThings.com and click on “Ways to Help” – “Plan a Gift” – “Donate a Vehicle”.

www.SeeGreatThings.com