



The Sight-Loss Support Group of Central Pennsylvania, Inc.

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The OUTLOOK

June, July, August 2014

**Official Newsletter of the Sight-Loss
Support Group of Central PA, Inc.**

A CALENDAR OF SUMMER THEATER FUN!

Five, count 'em, FIVE State College Community Theater productions are available for you to enjoy this summer! SLSG clients are welcome to attend the final dress rehearsals of these shows FREE OF CHARGE!! All shows begin at 7:30 pm.

Little Shop of Horrors: Thursday, June 5, 7:30 pm, Mt. Nittany Middle School

This affectionate spoof of 1950's sci-fi movies, is charming, tuneful, and hilarious. Little Shop of Horrors is one of the longest-running Off-Broadway musical comedies of all time. An assistant in a skid row flower shop becomes an overnight sensation when he discovers an exotic plant with a craving for fresh blood. ☺ Soon "Audrey II" grows into an ill-

tempered, R&B singing carnivore who offers him fame and fortune – in exchange for feeding her growing appetite, and finally revealing herself to be an alien creature poised for global domination!

Noises Off: Wednesday, June 18, 7:30 pm, Mt. Nittany Middle School

This uproarious comedy-within-a-comedy portrays a touring theater company's production during dress rehearsal, on opening night, and a performance near the end of the run when everyone's patience is shot. The entire show takes place behind the scenes with missed cues, flubbed lines and mounting friction among the cast. A hysterical romp!

Anything Goes: Tuesday, July 10, 7:30 pm, Mt. Nittany Middle School

Cole Porter's classic musical is an age-old tale of boy-meets-girl. Complications play out as the ocean liner, the S.S. American, heads out to sea and two unlikely couples set off on a course of true love. The show features some of musical theater's most memorable standards like "I Get a Kick Out of You", "It's De-Lovely", and of course, "Anything Goes".

Rabbit Hole: July 23, 7:30 pm, Penn State Downtown Theatre Center

Patrons with sight loss are invited to the dress rehearsal for Rabbit Hole, the only drama of the summer. Please note: This production is not being audio described.

The story begins eight months after the accidental death of their four-year-old son as Becca and Howie struggle to return to normalcy. When Becca's troubled sister Izzy announces that she's pregnant, the couple's differing styles of grieving are thrown into sharp relief. Winner of the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for

Drama, Rabbit Hole, alternatively sad and funny, is a deeply human look at a family's attempt to come to terms with the impossible – and emerge stronger than before.

Bye, Bye Birdie: Thursday, Monday, August 14, 7:30 pm, Mt. Nittany Middle School

This ever-popular musical comedy tells the story of rock star Conrad Birdie, the biggest thing to ever top the music charts. Women love him. Men want to be him. And teenage girls scream at the mention of his name! But when the U.S. Army drafts Birdie his manager, Albert Peterson, sees his meal ticket about to fly the coop. His longtime love Rose Alvarez (who can't wait for Albert to ditch the music biz and become something respectable like, well, an English teacher) is delighted. Desperate for a publicity stunt to help them survive Birdie's departure, Albert and Rose hatch a plan....and you'll have to come to the show to find out what happens next!

LIONS' JOURNEY FOR SIGHT

Lions' Journey for Sight Walk: Sunday, June 8, Boalsburg Military Museum

The Lions' Journey for Sight Walk, sponsored by the Centre Lions Foresight Committee, is an annual rite of spring. Each year Lions, Lionesses, and Leos from the 12 Lions Clubs of Centre County and their supporters rendezvous at the Boalsburg Military Museum, 28th Division Shrine in Boalsburg. The Lions use the money raised from the walk primarily to help individuals with sight loss; the Lions fund other humanitarian projects in Centre County as well.

Registration for the walk is at 1:30 pm and the walk begins at 2:00 pm. A free lunch for all walk

participants is served by the State College Lions Club. All one need do is get a sponsor (so much per mile) and walk once, twice or even thrice around the park. All donations pledged to each walker must be handed in at registration. So join the Lions' Journey for Sight on Sunday, June 8th and support the important work of the oldest and largest service organization for the blind in the world.

ARTS FESTIVAL SEASON 2014

Festival Eyes Guides are available to escort SLSCG clients through the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts in State College and the People's Choice Festival of Pennsylvania Arts and Crafts in Boalsburg. Both extravaganzas run from Thursday, July 10th through Sunday, July 13th. Wednesday, July 9th is Children's Day at the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts, but "children of all ages" will enjoy its activities. With the help of a trained Festival Eyes Guide, you can explore the nationally recognized sidewalk sale and exhibition with artists from all over the country. You won't want to miss the giant sand sculpture in the Parklet and the Downtown State College Italian Street Painting Festival!

The People's Choice Festival, celebrating 20 years this summer, showcases some of the best local art, food and entertainment. The festival has an added bonus this year in commemoration of its 20th anniversary - an "inner arch" of artists to allow even more local artisans to participate. "Artists in Action" will be back as well.

To reserve a Festival Eyes Guide, call the SLSCG office at 238-0132 and speak to Josie or leave a message. This service, as are all SLSCG services, is FREE FOR THE ASKING!

NFB BELL PROGRAM, SUMMER 2014: BRAILLE ENRICHMENT FOR LITERACY AND LEARNING

The National Federation of the Blind's BELL Program offers intensive Braille instruction to blind and low vision children during the summer months. BELL serves students who are not receiving enough Braille instruction in school or who could benefit from Braille enrichment over the summer. This summer, 24 states are offering BELL programs. The Pennsylvania BELL program will be held in Philadelphia from July 14th to July 25th. The application deadline is June 15th. To apply for a summer of Braille fun in Pennsylvania please visit www.nfb.org/BELL.

Michelle McManus, president of the NFB Happy Valley Chapter, was the coordinator of the 2013 BELL Program – Pennsylvania's first BELL Program! In the article below she chronicles her 2013 BELL experience.

Michelle on BELL

BELL on Valentine's Day. Yep, that's what happened to me. That's when I was asked to be the coordinator of the Pennsylvania BELL program. To say the least I was excited by this new challenge. I am a certified teacher of the blind, but I have rarely taught children who are blind. So I relished this opportunity with some apprehension, but mostly with anticipation. I knew I would have a great group of volunteers behind me including our state affiliate president James Antonacci and the National Federation of the Blind's 2013 Blind Educator of the Year, Harriet Go.

Our program was in July in Center City, Philadelphia at the Library for the Blind. Seven children attended the program ranging from five to 15 years of age. This

great group of kids was ready to soak up all the information we passed along to them. Our activities included Braille reading and writing, non-visual techniques, and travel skills. We incorporated Braille games into the day and the kids didn't want to stop playing. In Braille baseball a child reads a question; if the answer was correct it counted as a hit, if incorrect it was an out. In Braille twister some of the positions the children configured with their bodies were amazing!

A highlight for me were the many spontaneous teachable moments when a child asked a question and we served as blind role models, showing new ways of performing a task or experiencing a new object. Negotiating a grate in the sidewalk, modeling a better way to pass items around the lunch table - all aspects of everyday life but for a blind child the best practices may not come naturally.

BELL was an awesome two weeks for the participants and volunteers. We had a great group of people and I want to thank everyone for helping me put together our very first BELL program in Pennsylvania and for being awesome role models for today's blind children. We hope to keep the BELL program going in Pennsylvania for many years to come. See you next summer. We need more BELL ringers!

SUSAN KENNEDY: VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Imagine yourself at a play or dance performance. Now close your eyes. What don't you see? Now open your eyes just a smidge - what wisps of images are there? You have just experienced the world of blind and low vision patrons who love the performing arts.

Susan Kennedy is one of those rare birds devoted to bringing the performing arts to life for people who are visually impaired. Painting pictures with words, she slips in just the right phrase, describing scenery, costumes, lighting and the actions of the characters. She is a master of her craft.

When Susan retired she unleashed her considerable talent upon the community as a volunteer. Her decision to devote herself to audio description has been a true gift to our sight loss community. Susan also serves on the Board of Directors of the Sight-Loss Support Group. We cherish her wise counsel, vivacious smile and charming wit. Susan, you are a gem.

CAMP "CAN DO" AT LAUREL LAKE CAMP

This summer, Laurel Lake Camp and Retreat Center is introducing Camp CAN DO, a camping session for blind and visually impaired adults, 18 years and older. Laurel Lake Camp is located in Rossiter, PA (near Punxsutawney) and the session runs from Monday, August 18th to Friday, August 22nd. Recreational activities include: horseback riding, beeper-ball, swimming, canoeing on the river, paddle boating on the lake, fishing, archery, and crafts. Horsemanship training and an educational nature center are also available.

The fee for a blind camper is \$40, \$75 for a personal assistant, and \$100 for a sighted family member. Campers stay in modern cabins which have their own bathroom and shower facilities. Campers may bring their spouses if they wish. Couples are housed in private motel-like rooms and couples do not need to follow the regular camp schedule. The cost for a



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couple is \$140 per week. For more information: (814) 938-9300 or laurellakecamp.org.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ONE OF OUR OWN!

Martha Harris, a former participant in our Eye on Youth program, has accepted a full-time position as the Communications Instructor at BLIND, Inc. in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She is a graduate of Bucknell University and, just recently, of Louisiana Tech University. Martha will be teaching Braille and assistive technology to blind adults. A HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS to Martha for success in her new career!

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