

Lackawanna Blind Association

FRIENDS OF THE BLIND

Please respond before October 31st, 2020

_____ I am enclosing \$10 in membership dues for the Friends of the Blind.

_____ I am a life member of the Friends of the Blind but would like to make an additional contribution.

(Please make checks payable to Friends of the Blind)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone number _____

Email address _____

*****Stay tuned for a date and more information about Helen Keller Day 2021*****

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the LBA office 570-342-7613. We look forward to working with you!

September 2020

Dear Friends,

First and foremost, in this year of pandemic and confusion, we are hoping that you and all your loved ones are staying safe and healthy. It certainly has been a year to remember!

Everyone at the Lackawanna Blind Association has been working to continue services and activities for our clients making adjustments for the “new normal”. We have strived to keep in touch with all our clients using the phone and Zoom audio support groups. We are still using the minibus but with fewer clients on board. We still have classes but with fewer clients coming in together and using a staggered schedule. Our case workers have continued to keep in touch with clients making sure they are aware of coronavirus guidelines and doing what they can to keep clients safe and well. We have adjusted and readjusted according to our needs.

We have been proud of our Radio Reading Service for years and during these challenging times, we are especially proud of this unique service. The Radio Reading Service broadcasts on WUSR-FM 99.5 Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 10:00 am. Manager Paul Trama and twenty dedicated volunteers read selections of local and national news, community events, obituaries, TV listings, horoscopes, editorials, and sports from The Scranton Times-Tribune. They also include LBA activities and provide connections for food banks and other resources. This is such a valuable source of information for the blind and visually impaired and has even greater significance during this unprecedented time. It helps people keep in touch with the news and hopefully reduces isolation especially for those living alone.

We are extremely grateful to the University of Scranton for hosting our program on their radio channel since 2009. It can also be heard online at <http://wusrstreamingscranton.edu8080/live.mp3>. We are also grateful to The Scranton Times-Tribune for numerous years of our newspaper subscription. And as always, we extend a big thanks to our many dedicated volunteers who help make this all possible.

Our big news is that the LBA received a \$5000 grant from the Schwartz-Mack Foundation to purchase high quality radios for residents in nursing homes in Lackawanna County. Due to the pandemic, residents spend more time in their rooms so the LBA is happy to give them the opportunity to listen to the Radio Reading Service. We are always looking for ways to help individuals feel more informed and included.

We continue to count on dues from the Friends of the Blind and for any donations that come our way. We are hoping to have Helen Keller Day in the Spring of 2021, but we will have to keep you posted about a date and information as we see the new year unfold. It's hard to plan programs, etc. that are so necessary for our clients...hard to have everything so 'up in the air.' But with your help and getting this coronavirus under control, we look forward to 'blue skies' in the very near future.

Thanks for everything you do –

Mary Lou Wascavich - Executive Director of Lackawanna Blind Association
Molly M. Ames - Treasurer for Friends of the Blind