

PERSPECTIVE

Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Low Vision Is a High Concern for Many

by J. Douglas Armstrong

I have been blind since birth. It only makes sense that my passion is to make life a little easier for others who are either blind or have some sort of visual impairment. In my role as chairman of the Board of Trustees for Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, I know the issue of low vision – meaning someone can't see well even with glasses – within the metropolitan Cincinnati area is important, I just didn't know how important until we partnered with the University of Cincinnati's Institute for Policy Research for a survey focusing upon the issue of visual impairments.

Clovernook first reviewed national research, which helped to design our local survey. Prevent Blindness America cites vision loss as the nation's fourth leading disability. This, coupled with the fact that every six seconds a baby boomer (born between 1945 and 1964) turns 60, was a wake-up call for me. In addition, the National Eye Institute

cites that 71% of adults reported eyesight loss as a leading concern, with only 10% reporting that they use a visual device to help with their low vision. According to 2004 results conducted by the RTI International research group, major visual disorders annually cost the United States an estimated \$35.4 billion.

Locally, 1,550 varied and diverse households in the Greater Cincinnati area, including northern Kentucky and southeast Indiana, were contacted. The demographic parallels between our region and the U.S. Census Bureau are strikingly similar. In reviewing the statistics, Cincinnati mirrors the nation in terms of age, gender, and most ethnic backgrounds. These households were asked key questions so that Clovernook could use the data for vision and program service development.

The results:

- 64% of the survey participants revealed they had a household family member who has difficulty seeing, even when wearing corrective lenses.

(continued on page 2)



Chairman, Clovernook Board of Trustees

Mr. J. Douglas Armstrong, a practicing attorney in Cincinnati, has a B.S. degree in mathematics and computer science from Gardner-Webb University and a J.D. degree from Wake Forest University School of Law. He has received multiple awards since 1992, and was an Olympic Torchbearer for the Atlanta Olympic games in June 1996. Mr. Armstrong, a resident of Cincinnati, is married to Jackie Robinson. They have one daughter, Jennifer.

Low Vision (continued from page 1)

- 83% stated they feel the issue of low vision is very important.
- 43% commented nothing would deter them from seeking services to help them with their low vision.
- 49% listed insurance or monetary issues as a deterrent from seeking help.

I find the last statistic disturbing, so much so that I am issuing a call to action to anyone experiencing low vision and feel that they can't afford to have a normal quality of life.

After everything medically and surgically is completed by your physician and you have permanent low vision, there are organizations across the nation, including Clovernook, who can help. Don't let cost be a factor. Low-vision assistance is more affordable and accessible than you might think. The cost of an optometric low-vision exam is typically covered for eligible individuals by Medicare or other public/private funding sources. Low-vision devices that optimize remaining sight often cost less than prescription eyeglasses.

Non-profit low-vision service providers, like Clovernook, strive to ensure donor funds are available to help offset costs for anyone who can't afford these items.

Information is easily accessible:

www.clovernook.org

Cincinnati: 888-234-7156

Memphis: 901-523-9590

www.agenciesfortheblind.org

866-645-2449



Dr. Eric Smith with a Clovernook client.

Eye-Q

Are you or someone you love coping with low vision? Is it difficult to read pill bottles, canned food labels, the newspaper, or mail?

If yes, let

Clovernook Center

for the Blind and Visually Impaired help. The first step is to connect with Clovernook. Our professional staff will walk you through a step-by-step assessment of your low-vision needs. We offer five locations throughout Cincinnati and one in Memphis for your convenience.

Our eye care physicians are experts in their field dedicated to improving the quality of life for those who are experiencing difficulty with their sight. To schedule a low-vision evaluation, please call 888-234-7156 and ask to be connected to the Low

Vision Clinic in Cincinnati or Memphis. Our team of professionals stand ready to help you see better.

2006 Clovernook Low Vision Customer Satisfaction Statistics

- ✓ Clovernook received a **100%** customer satisfaction rating.
- ✓ **95%** of those who visited our Low Vision Clinic purchased devices, which helped them see better.
- ✓ **94%** stated our staff and physicians were clearly experts in their field of knowledge.
- ✓ **95%** of our customers would call us again!

Full-court Press: Clovernook Memphis Combines Business and Sports

In December, Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired hosted the Memphis Grizzlies Business-to-Business (B2B) event at the FedExForum in downtown Memphis. The event provided Clovernook with an interactive opportunity to network, promote our products and services, and build awareness among the business leaders and sponsors of the Memphis Grizzlies, a National Basketball Association (NBA) team.

NBA Commissioner David Stern was the keynote speaker followed by Clovernook's Board Chair, Doug Armstrong, who presented Commissioner Stern with a Braille copy of the NBA schedule. The Commissioner was pleased with the gift, commenting that it was "a first" for him and that it would be proudly displayed for others to view.



Robin Usalis, vice president of Clovernook Program Services (left) with Peggy Markstein.

Markstein Family Donation Moves Clovernook Forward in 2007

Through a generous contribution from the Markstein family, Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired's Cincinnati office was able to purchase a much needed van for transporting staff and equipment to its growing number of satellite Low

Vision Clinics. "We are so honored to receive this donation," said Clovernook President Jeffrey Brasie. "It truly allows us to put our mission 'on wheels' and reach out to the community. We are so grateful for generous donors like the Marksteins."



More than 200 guests from Tennessee businesses and state and federal government agencies had the chance to become more familiar with Clovernook's full range of services at the Grizzlies B2B event.

Get Teed Up

Mark your calendars for the third annual Clovernook Cincinnati Moonlight Drives 2007 Golf Outing on April 23. This year's event will be held at the prestigious northern Cincinnati Tournament Players Club at River's Bend, featuring a specially lit nighttime course. All proceeds will benefit Clovernook's services to assist the blind and visually impaired.

This year's Moonlight Drives will honor Clovernook volunteer Frances D. "Fran" Cohen. Cohen is a member of the Board of Trustees and the chairwoman of the Fund Development committee. In addition to her great work with Clovernook, she is involved in the Cincinnati charitable community raising funds for select nonprofit organizations. "I cannot think of a more deserving volunteer to honor at this event," stated Elmer Thomas, co-chair of the event.

Registration begins at 3 p.m., with shotgun start at 4 p.m. Each foursome will play five holes in the light before dinner and the same five holes with glow-balls in twilight. After dark, play will resume on the beautifully illuminated golf course. In addition to the 10-hole scramble, there will be a chance for golfers to wear special goggles that simulate what it's like to have a visual impairment.

Players, non-players and spectators are invited to enjoy the evening with cocktails, dinner, wine tasting, simulated putting course and silent auction, featuring fantastic items, while benefiting an excellent cause. Fran Cohen, the honoree, will be recognized during the evening.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to spend an evening with friends and family while supporting the Clovernook mission," said Al Tuchfarber, Ph.D. and co-chair of the event. "This is one of our signature fundraising events that funds our mission and allows us to enhance our services annually."

Space is limited, so register early to ensure your place. For more information, to register, or to donate a silent auction item, please contact Jessica Harvey at 888-234-7156, ext. 2216 or e-mail jharvey@clovernook.org. Deadline to register is April 12, 2007.

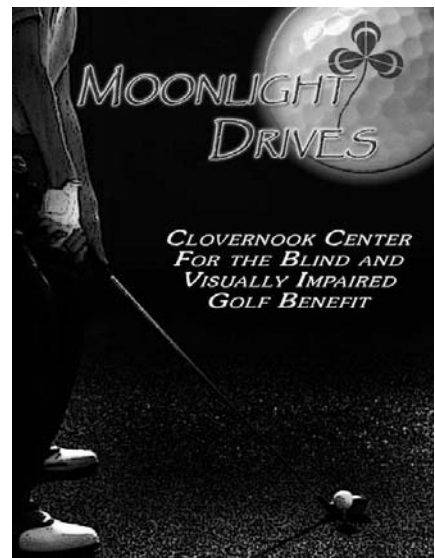


River's Bend

FACTORY DIRECT SINCE 1953
Champion
WINDOWS • SIDING PATIO ROOMS



SCHIFF-KREIDLER-SHELL
INSURANCE AND RISK SERVICES



Monday, April 23, 2007
Tournament Players Club
4 p.m. Shotgun Start
5:30 p.m. Cocktails and
Silent Auction
6:15 p.m. Dinner and
Silent Auction (cont.)
7:30 p.m. Nighttime Tee

\$275 per golfer includes:
greens fee, cart, dinner,
drink tickets, complimentary
non-alcoholic beverages,
complimentary guest pass to
play 18 holes at Tournament
Players Club at a later date,
wine tasting, silent auction,
putting course with visual
impairment simulation and
support of Clovernook.

\$150 for spectators and
non-players includes dinner,
drink tickets, complimentary
non-alcoholic beverages, wine
tasting, putting course with
visual impairment simulation
and support of Clovernook.

Clovernook Associate Named NIB Employee of the Year

BRITT LINCOLN RECOGNIZED AT NATIONAL CONVENTION

This past fall, Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired employee Britt Lincoln, a Braille proofreader in the Transcription Department, was recognized as the National Industries for the Blind (NIB) Peter J. Salmon "Blind Employee of the Year." Lincoln was awarded this prestigious distinction from among NIB's nearly 90 agencies and more than 5,500 employees across the country.

Lincoln delivered an acceptance speech, complete with a song she wrote when she was in the eighth grade. The song helped her persevere

during some difficult times in her life and educational pursuits.

"When I was in the eighth grade, I had a lot going on – homework, peer issues, stress about going to the Kentucky State School for the Blind – some days I asked myself why I was pushing myself so hard," Lincoln said. "So to stay focused on my goals through all the hard stuff and to remind myself why I was putting myself through it, I wrote the song."

"I was so proud of Britt as she delivered her remarks and her song," said Clovernook President Jeffrey Brasie. "As she concluded her song, the 450 people in attendance all clapped their hands and sung along during the last three verses. There

wasn't a dry eye in the house."

Lincoln was born blind, with a congenital face anomaly – absent both eyes, without a nose and with a severe cleft palate – for which she has experienced more than 25 reconstructive surgeries. In addition, she has Asperger's Syndrome, a neurological impairment on the autism spectrum.

Lincoln joined Clovernook in 2002 to work in the Transcription Department as a proofreader. She sings, plays the banjo, clogs, reads audio books and magazines each week and participates in the talent show at Clovernook holiday parties. She won the countywide "American Treasures" talent contest sponsored by Hamilton County MRDD. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Kentucky. These factors led to her selection as the Peter J. Salmon "Blind Employee of the Year."

"I think it is a wonderful award, and I am glad the selection committee decided to award it to me," said Lincoln. "I am thrilled the committee thought I was worthy, and I hope I can stand up to it."



Britt Lincoln (left) received the Employee of the Year Award from Jim Gibbon, CEO of National Industries for the Blind in Scottsdale, AZ.

Tax-free Opportunity

This year only, you can make a gift directly to Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) without counting it as income or paying income tax! The Pension Protection Act of 2006 encourages financial support of American charitable organizations.

The process is easy:

- Decide how much money you want to donate to a 501(c)(3) organization up to \$100,000.
- Ask your financial consultant, banker or tax professional to transfer funds directly from your IRA or roll over IRA account to the organization.
- You can make a gift any time on or before December 31, 2007, if you are age 70 and a half or older.

The benefits are many for the donor, and we hope you consider Clovernook as your charity of choice. If you need additional information, please call Anne Maxfield, vice president of Development and Community Relations at 888-234-7156 or e-mail: amaxfield@clovernook.org

Cincinnati General Electric Senior ELFUNs Mark Milestone

The General Electric (GE) Senior ELFUNs are retired GE employees who volunteer and repair talking book cassette players for the National Library Service for the

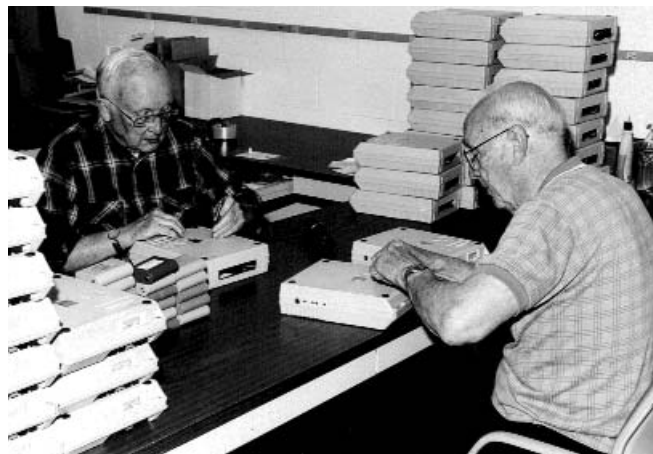
Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) and their patrons. In Cincinnati, there are 95 active volunteers participating every Wednesday and Thursday year round, repairing electrical boards and rejuvenating batteries for the cassette players that play NLS audio books. The repaired cassette players are then distributed to listeners across the United States.

This past spring, the GE retirees celebrated the repair of their 50,000th cassette player since the project began in 1989. NLS estimates that its

volunteers have contributed \$2.6 million to date.

“The repair work that the ELFUNs undertake is such an incredible and amazing effort,” said Jackie Conner, vice president of Multistate Center East, which circulates books for NLS. “Without the ELFUNs, it would be difficult for us to provide this same level of service to the vision-impaired who enjoy books and rely heavily on their cassette players.”

Multistate is operated by Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired and consists of 45,000 square feet of warehouse and distribution space. The facility maintains thousands of publications in adaptive format, which are shipped worldwide.



ELFUN volunteers Bob Smith (left) and Bernie Burdick help make critical repairs to talking book cassette players so that the blind and visually impaired can enjoy the latest bestsellers.

Clovernook Tribute Gifts

A tribute gift is a thoughtful way to honor family and friends while benefiting many others with the essential services that Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired provides. To make your tribute gift, contact Clovernook at 888-234-7156, ext. 2274 or visit www.clovernook.org.

We appreciate the generous support from the following people who made tribute gifts from May through December 2006:

HONORARIUM DONATIONS

In honor of Ms. Lauren Allen
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Allen
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Felser
Mr. & Mrs. Fine

In honor of Mr. & Mrs. George E. Dorin
Mr. & Mrs. Stan Shulman

In honor of Mr. Stephen Allen
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In honor of Judge J. Dennis Reap
Donati Law Firm
(Memphis office)

In honor of Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sloan
Mr. & Mrs. George E. Dorin

In honor of Ms. Sarah Lynn Tune
National Society of the Dames of
the Court of Honor

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Cliff Jacobs Automotive

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In Memory of LaVerne Cassinelli
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Mrs. Ruth H. Rubendunst

In Memory of Mrs. Vera Marie
Kilcoyne
Ms. Eileen Bender

In Memory of Mr. Tom Kolde
Ms. Virginia MacDonald



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and community relations

We would love to hear from you!
Direct your questions or comments to us
via our toll-free number, 888-234-7156
or via email, amaxfield@clovernook.org.

Clovernook provides comprehensive program services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Through our Braille production, paper products and contract manufacturing business units, we provide quality products that generate revenue to support our operations and create job opportunities for people who are visually impaired.

**If you or someone you know has vision loss,
please call us about our services at 888-234-7156.**

The Clovernook Board of Trustees generally meet the third Thursday of the month in January, March, April, June, September and November. To offer recommendations or comments to the board, please call 888-234-7156.

O U R M I S S I O N

To promote independence and foster the highest quality of life for people with visual impairments, including those with additional disabilities.