

New Jersey Blind Citizens Association, Inc.

A.K.A. New Jersey Blind Men's Association



Founded 1910 – Incorporated 1917
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November 25, 2008

Dear Fellow Lions:

On behalf of the NJ Blind Citizens Association/Camp Happiness, I would like to formally recognize so many special Lions who have helped in 2008 to enrich the lives of our blind citizens, and assure the success and ongoing viability of our organization. I hope this communication can be a part of the formal meeting minutes. The following is in ALPHABETICAL order.

Thanks to:

Greg Bures for attending AT&T Pioneers meetings, and for accompanying me to Newark on Lions business.

Dave Chainani for financial help, furniture donations, helping with the car show, and already meeting with me to start planning for next years car show.

Brian Compton for past financial support, and for supporting our efforts with respect to our fine arts program for the blind, and our recent exhibit.

Kathy Davies for incredible efforts with our gift auction, for accompanying me to Lions presentations, for financial support, and for helping with almost every fundraising event that benefits our blind citizens.

John Giordano for conceiving, and leading, the Annual Super Bowl Pancake breakfast that not only benefits Camp Happiness, but is by far the best Lions breakfast in the State of New Jersey. Also for major help with the car show, and other BCA events.

Bill Golda for tax and annual financial statement preparation, and for “gentle billing” considering the manual effort involved. Also for helping at so many BCA events.

Paul Guido for help at the pancake breakfast, and for help picking up donated gym equipment which has realized \$2,000 cash for the BCA.

Bob Guijarro for BCA operations assistance, and for support in so many ways that has helped our organization succeed. Also, for being a friend that recognizes the efforts of our staff and what it takes to succeed.

Jim Guerrieri for helping at special events, financial support, and for facilitating a recent donation of merchandise that could yield \$2,000 or more for our organization.

Tony Hernandez for helping to facilitate the CCTV donation for a local visually impaired child, and for helping at our Open House on a 95 degree day to the point where he literally passed out!

Rich LaBarbera for resurrecting our relationship with the Jersey Shore AT&T Pioneers, a relationship that has yielded financial support, and this week the completion of an accessible ramp to our day camp building.

Please visit our website – njbca.org
A Non-Profit, Non-Sectarian, Tax Exempt Organization
** Serving People of New Jersey Who Are Blind **
All Donations Are Tax Deductible

Tom Mahon for help at the car show, Open House and other functions, as well as his critical support through American Legion Post 338.

Paul Morris for a networking introduction that yielded a \$5,000 donation from Investors Savings Foundation.

Ray Veth for constant support with awards and “gentle billing” and pro-bono work.

Mike Vitkansas for the most difficult Car Show project leader position...sales team leader. The car show was once again a tremendous fundraiser for our blind citizens, in large part to Mike.

You may have noticed two names left out of alpha order:

Craig Finnegan – In the four years I have been a Lion, there has never been a time when I have asked Craig for help and he has said no. Not only that, but he never even hesitates. Physical work, financial support, special functions, Lions support...there is just too much to list. Craig Finnegan is a Prince, and his impact on the NJBCA is incalculable.

Al Siano – Melvin Jones said you can't feel good about yourself until you help someone else. The NJBCA was left in such poor shape, that without the help of the Middletown Lions, it might have gone under. The car show, conceived by Lion President, has realized more than \$30,000 for the BCA. Rarely does a day go by that Al's passion isn't felt by our blind clients. It may be a press release, or someone he met in the supermarket calling to volunteer or donate. It might be personal financial support, or taking time to provide career guidance at our job placement program for the blind. It might be conceiving our gym, which has exponentially increased the fitness level of the participants, or years of work on our website to transition it to our blind computer instructor. It might be networking calls or contacts, or introductions that have provided thousands of dollars in support of our mission. Al facilitated the Brookdale car show, has driven 100 miles and back to Lions presentations, and even took merchandise to a flea market to raise money for the blind. This is a passion that is hard to match, and I apologize if I have ever taken it for granted.

We now serve 300% more blind/visually impaired folks that we used to, and six programs are thriving now that didn't exist. None of this would have been possible without the people in this room.

J. Douglas Scott
Executive Director
New Jersey Blind Citizens Association, Inc.