Outreach Center Network News Letter

December 2018

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### Holiday Lights

In St. Louis there are several parks that have a wonderful light display for the Christmas holidays. When my two daughters Tori and Meg were little, they love to look at the lights. Being a blind dad, I found myself in a tight situation. I love to please my girls, but a blind guy does not get much out of such a drive in the park.

We took the ride through the winter wonderland of lights. As soon as the slow drive through the park started, having nothing really to do, I dozed in the front seat.

It was the excited squeals from the back seat that brought be back to the car, the ride, and the family. "There's Rudolph!" Tori shouted. "Wook at the swiwwie behr!" Meg said as she laughed.

I started to pay attention to what they were saying and found that I was starting to see the light show as well. The park trees were coming alive. It no longer was a row of oak trees. Instead it was three snowmen. It no longer was a bush but rather a slay being pulled by a horse.

Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

10:15 And how can they preach unless they are sent?

10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

It was the joy and excitement expressed by my family that woke me from my slumber. It was their words, description, and commentary that helped a blind dad start to see the beautiful evening activity done in lights.

That's a lot like the role we play as Christians in our world. Our joy in the midst of this world's cold dark reality catches the attention of the spiritual sleeping. Our message brings across the vision or picture of a loving, caring God in Jesus. The amazing thing is at that moment of stirring and visioning, God imparts faith that spiritually a person may see and believe.

My kids taught me a lesson. I guess that's why Jesus directs us to be like a little child. Share the joy. Speak the vision. Tell people about our God.

Whether a driver, cook or any other kind of volunteer, this is what you do. Your work and effort helps blind people around the world see a Jesus that was hidden from blind people in years past. As a blind person, having been given this vision, you also play an important role. As you encourage an acquaintance, invite someone to an outreach center, you too are sharing the vision of a loving God.

I hope and pray you have a happy Christmas and a bless New Year.

Pastor Dave Andrus

### From The Bay City Outreach Center

You are invited

We had five people for our November sight and sound meeting. Never-the-less we had fun at our talent show.  Everyone did something and all the acts were good.

Our December meeting will be on Friday December 14th from 1-at the Good Samaritan Rescue Mission 713 9th Street in Bay City.  Anyone who has vision or hearing loss is invited to join us.

Since it is our Christmas party, we ask that you bring a dish to pass and your table setting for this meeting.  If you cannot afford something, please come anyway.  We will have fellowship, eat, and sing Christmas music.  The piano is across the hall from our meeting room and we should be able to use it.

If anyone has questions, please call Russ or Zoe Zimmerman.  We hope to have a good turn out for this meeting.

In January we plan to have 2 outlaws and a Good Guy sing for us.

  Russ and Zoe

### Outreach Center Holiday Opportunities

Taken from this newsletter December 2015

In that December is very busy for congregations some centers do not meet. Others combine November and December gatherings early in December, thereby avoiding the busy holiday itself. No matter what your practice there are several things you can do as a center and as leaders.

1. People are more open to be prayed for during the Christmas season. Therefore go out of your way to contact people who are blind and tell them you are praying for them. Ask if they have anything specific he or she wants included in your prayers.
2. This is a great time of year to both be a blessing and remind people of the blessing that Christmas is. Remind people that we give gifts on Christmas because God started the practice of giving when he gave his son to save us.
3. People who are not involved with God or church are more receptive to an invite during the holiday season. So if your outreach center is meeting, go out of your way to invite people who have not come or who quit coming.

### Christmas Jokes

Question: What do you call Santa when he stops moving?

Answer: Santa Pause!

Question: Where does a snowman keep his money?

Answer: In a snow bank.

Question: How do you scare a snowman?

Answer: You get a hairdryer!

Question: What do they sing under the ocean during the winter?

Answer: Christmas Corals!

Question: Why don't elves just buy the toys with money?

Answer: Because they're a little short!

Question: How much did Santa pay for his sleigh?

Answer: Nothing, it was on the house!

### Holiday Decoration And Planning

These are selected comments from a phone call discussion November 12, 2018 from a vision loss group in Pennsylvania with 16 people who are blind. Several callers are from our outreach centers. I printed the blind related comments only.

What do we do for Thanksgiving?

Mary Ann hosts Thanksgiving. Socializing in a home where she is not familiar with, and not helping is a problem and clearing the table in a home where you don’t know where things are. So she invites people who may not have a place to go. Hosting is easier than guesting.

Martha relayed that for the last ten years when she had no family left and would have been home alone, she started listening to other visually impaired people in the same situation. There is a restaurant near her that does a great job serving visually impaired people.. She called and reserved a room that holds about 15 people. She invited people to come to the restaurant and break bread together (Dutch treat) and exchanged gifts together on Christmas.

Janet has been cooking Thanksgiving since her marriage to Ed. This year her grandchildren cooked Thanksgiving dinner and made a mess for Ed and Janet to clean up. Although people mean well by helping to put things away, if they do, Ed and Janet cannot find where those things were put, so they decline help.

Bobbi says the family all go around the table and each one can tell what they are thankful for. Really neat to hear what the kids will say.

Black Friday anybody?  Several in the group says cyber shopping. Its better. Big crowds are frightening, especially for a visually impaired person.

Christmas: when do you get started preparing? When do you put your tree up? Bobbi does it just before or just after Thanksgiving. Bobbi has an artificial tree. The first year Bobbi and Rodger were married, they got a real tree. The first day the needles fell off and kept doing it. They watered, etc. When the time to discard the tree came, they threw the tree out the window because all the needles were gone by then anyway. Putting Christmas lights on is difficult. Mary says that part is stressful. Janet and Ed decorate an artificial tree and put a garbage bag on it and next year they merely need to remove the bag.

Tammy said the last few years she has not decorated. Now that she lives independently in an apartment, she has received a ceramic Christmas tree with decorations. It is about 18 inches high. That’s what she uses. It’s now a pretty old tree but still very useful.

Sue said before M.D. decorating was not a big thing but that all changed. When you cannot see decorations, it takes some of the joy out of it. But kids and how they feel about it all makes all the difference.

Tip for decorating. Jule Ann put a tree in the corner.. With the garland start at the top, loop it, loop it, down the back, go toward the back and then the sides and the front. Some people like to wrap it straight but she loops it.

### Final Thoughts

In upcoming issues we can and will look at many of the same topics as well as others. If you have questions, thoughts or suggestions, please send them to me or post them on the blind ministry email list.

Pastor Dave