

Vision Loss Resources

Community Center Calendar February 2016

Register, Questions, and Cancellations: Call or Email

612-843-3439 rsvp@vlrw.org

To listen to an audio version of the calendar, call the Activity Line at 612-253-5155.

RSVPing for events in February will begin 7:00 AM on Monday, January 25.

Attention: VLR Offices will be closed on Monday, February 15th for President's Day.

Reminder: You must RSVP for all activities every month. We ask that you RSVP at least 3 working days prior to event to ensure that we have enough registered participants, supplies, and volunteers.

Severe Weather Days: Please call the VLR Weather Hotline at 612-284-8107 to see if VLR offices and activities are open for that day. The hotline will be updated by 5:00 AM if VLR is closing for severe weather. Participants who have RSVPd for a class will also be notified.

“On the wind in February
Snowflakes float still,
Half inclined to turn to rain,
Nipping, dripping, chill.”

--Christina Georgina Rossetti,
“A Year's Windfalls, 1866

A Note from Kate: White House Petition

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) has launched a petition calling on the Obama administration to release the ADA internet regulations promptly. In order for the administration to respond to the petition, 100,000 signatures are needed by **February 11, 2016**, which is no small task. I encourage you not only to sign this petition, which only takes a moment, but also to share it on your personal Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and all other social media outlets. Share with your groups, churches, clubs, civic organizations, etc. Signing involves just entering your name, email address, and zip code before pressing the “sign now” button.

You can access the petition online at:

<https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/direct-us-department-justice-promptly-release-ada-internet-regulations>

Here is what it says:

“We petition the Obama Administration to: Direct the U.S. Department of Justice to promptly release the ADA Internet regulations.

President Obama:

On the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, you said that you would issue regulations implementing the requirement for accessible websites, noting that they would be ‘the most important updates to

the ADA since its original enactment.’ You now say that the regulations won’t come out until 2018, after you leave office. But the need for these regulations is now more urgent.

People with disabilities struggle to do everyday tasks such as banking, purchasing goods, and more. Inaccessible websites also hinder our education and employment. Website developers need guidance on how to comply with the law. Failing to provide that guidance is irresponsible and inconsistent with your commitment to civil rights. We demand that you issue the regulations immediately.”

Happy signing and sharing!

Kate Grathwol

President/CEO of Vision Loss Resources

FEBRUARY EVENTS:

***Abbreviations: MPLS=Minneapolis, SP=St Paul**

2/1 (M): Games Extravaganza

10:00-12:00. In MPLS. Cost: \$1.00

Come for lively fun with board and trivia games. There's plenty of time for games, laughter, conversation, and a light snack. New people are always welcome!

2/1 (M): FEATURED EVENT: Presentation: Eating Well with The Wedge

1:00-2:30. In MPLS. No charge.

Do you want to incorporate healthier foods into your diet,

but don't know where to begin? Organic, vegetarian, vegan, paleo, gluten-free... what does it all mean? Get an inside look at various healthy food trends and learn how you can add nutritious ingredients to your diet--more affordably! Tasty samples will be provided. A big thank you to our neighbor The Wedge Co-Op for presenting and sharing samples!

2/2 (T): Braille: Uncontracted/Grade 1

9:30-11:00. In MPLS. Cost: \$1.00

This is a beginning Braille class to discuss and begin learning Grade 1 Braille. You may attend class for extra guidance or begin the class and study at home. Special tutoring arrangements may also be available - please discuss with the instructor. Resources will be drawn from Hadley School for the Blind correspondence class and previously designed coursework from SSB and MN Talking Book services. Also meets on the **9th, 16th, and 23rd.**

2/2 (T): Easy Cooking

10:30-1:30. In SP. Suggested donation of \$5.00.

Enjoy creating beef stroganoff, green beans with pine nuts, Valentine punch, and a cookie surprise!

2/2 (T): DeafBlind Beads

4:00-7:00. In SP. Cost is \$5 for the month, plus your kit.

This is an arts and crafts group for deafblind consumers. Support staff (SSPs) are provided. Also meets on the **9th, 16th, and 23rd.**

2/3 (W): 3F's: Fabric, Fiber, and Friends

1:00-3:30. In MPLS. No charge.

Do you enjoy knitting, crocheting, quilting, or creative hobbies? Then come in and bring your own project to work on as you enjoy the company of others. This group also meets on the **10th, 17th, and 24th.**

2/3 (W): Supper Club

5:00-7:00.

Enjoy delicious Italian fare at Old Spaghetti Factory.

Entrees start at \$11.50.

Address: 233 Park Ave #100, Minneapolis 55415

2/4 (TH): 500 Cards

10:00-12:00. In MPLS. Cost: \$1.00

Come in and enjoy some coffee and cards. Also meets on the **25th.**

(No Beading in February.)

2/5 (F): Tech: Discover Windows Operating System

12:25-1:15. In MPLS. Cost: \$10.00

Come and bring any questions that you might have regarding Microsoft Office applications such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Internet Explorer, or any other screen reader related questions. Feel free to bring your own laptop if you have one. Some practice computers are available at VLR to use during class. Meets in Room 120 along the classroom wall. Class size limit: 3.

2/8 (M): Walking Group

9:00-11:30. No charge.

Come and get some exercise by walking with friends. Space is limited. VLR will confirm RSVPs for Walking Group that are accepted. First-come, first-served basis. This group also meets on the **22nd**.

Address: Door 13, Southdale Mall, Edina.

2/8 (M): Hearts

12:00-2:00. In MPLS. Cost: \$1.00

Come in and enjoy some coffee and cards.

2/9 (T): Writing Group

10:30-12:00. In SP. No charge.

This group is an opportunity to hear ideas from the experts on writing, to get inspired to write and to share writing you may be working on with others in the group. No experience necessary – everyone has a story!

2/9 (T): Tea and Literature

12:30-2:00. In SP. Cost: \$3.00

Come to enjoy a cup of tea and listen to beautifully written literature.

2/10 (W): Reader's Choice Book Club

1:00-2:30. In MPLS. No charge.

Just in time for the Saint Paul Winter Carnival, we will read Sherlock Holmes and the Ice Palace Murders by local author Larry Millett.

2/10 (W): Bingo

5:00-7:00. In MPLS. Cost: \$1.00

Everyone loves Bingo! Bring your friends and family for a night that is sure to be fun.

2/11 (TH): Career Resources Group

10:00-11:30. In MPLS. No charge.

Are you or someone you know struggling with career questions? The Career Resources Group strives to help individuals manage their career search. This group will provide people with low vision an opportunity to share their experience with others who can closely identify with them, and to educate group members about various career opportunities. Topics include monthly check-ins, brainstorming, questions, and short presentations. For more info, call Mark (612-843-3404) or Paulette (612-843-3416).

2/11 (TH): Tech A: iPhone Basics: Object Identifier Apps

10:00-11:00. In MPLS. No charge.

Can't figure out the object in front of you? Forgot where you left something? Come learn about a variety of object identifier apps.

2/11 (TH): Tech: Drop-In Session

11:00-1:00. In MPLS. No charge.

Bring in your iPhone, iPad, or other iOS device (sorry, no Android or PC) and have your questions answered. No

need to RSVP and no charge. Just swing by! Also meets on Tuesday the **23rd**.

2/11 (TH): Alumni Group

12:30-2:00. In MPLS. No charge.

VLR Alumni past and present - bring a dish to pass and join us for a potluck lunch! Connect and visit with other VLR alumni. Listen and share around topics of blindness, advocacy, education, employment, and living the life you want! Please RSVP.

2/13 (SA): Soup On Saturday: Love Bug Edition!

11:30-1:30. In SP. Suggested donation of \$5.00.

Enjoy soup, bread, and a Valentine dessert with your friends. Afterwards, learn about some real life critters and insects in an entomology lesson from a special guest speaker. "You'll learn to love 'em," says Pumba (Lion King).

2/16 (T): Lunch Bunch

11:30-1:30.

Dixie's offers the best in southern comfort food and casual dining in a warm and friendly atmosphere. Try their award-winning barbeque sauce. Come for the food, stay for the hospitality! Plates start at \$13.50.

Address: 695 Grand Ave., Saint Paul 55105

2/17 (W): Continuing Education

11:15-12:30. In MPLS. No charge.

This month's topic is Learning from Hindsight. Knowing what you know now, is there anything you might have done differently? Can this shape decisions you make in the future? Are you stuck in a regret trap? Group discussion of how we can learn from ourselves. Everyone is welcome!

2/17 (W): Movie and Popcorn

4:00-6:00. In MPLS. Cost: \$1.00

Enjoy the comedy Johnny English Reborn. Description: "After a disastrous mission in Mozambique, British agent Johnny English (Rowan Atkinson) has retreated to a Tibetan monastery to try to forget his shame. But when he receives an urgent call from MI-7 to lead a mission that only he can handle, English is back in action." Popcorn, coffee, hot chocolate, and tea are provided. Feel free to bring your dinner or order in.

2/17 (W): Reading "Clinic"

4:30-7:00. In MPLS. No charge.

Need help catching up with mail or other paperwork? Volunteers will be on-hand to work one-on-one with you. Due to limited availability, please RSVP. Thank you to our friends at TCF Bank for their volunteer support!

2/18 (TH): Calendar Assembly

9:00-11:00. In MPLS. No charge.

Join the many helping hands that work together to assemble the Community Center Calendar. Treats served.

2/22 (M): Cribbage

12:00-2:00. In MPLS. Cost: \$1.00

(Please note: Cribbage moved to 4th week in February due to President's Day Holiday.) Come in and enjoy some coffee and cards.

2/23 (T): Tech B: Notetaking

10:00-11:00. In MPLS. No charge.

Do you ever need to jot something down or make a quick list that you can find later? Learn how to dictate, record, and type using apps and Siri.

2/23 (T): Knit Again

10:00-12:00. In SP. No charge.

Bring your knitting project that needs assistance and receive some help.

2/23 (T): Crochet and Knit

12:00-2:00. In SP. No charge.

Help make projects that we give back to the community. Be a part of donating to local charities.

2/24 (W): Beaded Scarf/Fiber Spinning Troubleshoot

11:30-1:30. In MPLS. No charge besides own materials.

Bring your own beaded scarf or spinning project that you've already started that may need a bit of troubleshooting. You are welcome to stop by between 11:30-1:30 for all or part of the time. We need at least 2 people signed up to hold class. When you RSVP, please

specify scarf or spinning so Denise knows which supplies to have available.

2/24 (W): Fitness is Fun!

4:00-5:30. In MPLS. Cost: \$1.00

Stay on top of that New Year's resolution! Get your body moving in our fitness center and stay on track with your fitness goals. All levels of experience are welcome!

2/26 (F): Pottery Class

10:00-12:00. In SP. Cost: \$5.00

(Please note: Pottery has moved to the 4th Friday.) Join us as we work on hand-built clay projects. Come learn how to make plates, cups, or create whatever comes to the imagination. No experience necessary.

COMING ATTRACTIONS:

Living Skills Class at VLR Minneapolis – We are excited to offer an expanded course to teach daily tasks. During the course, you'll be introduced to a wide variety of skills, adaptive techniques, and products. With these new skills and encouragement, you'll think of new ways to accomplish daily activities and remain independent. Class will be on Thursdays in February (2/4, 2/11, 2/18, 2/25) from 10:00-3:00 at VLR Minneapolis. Class size is limited. Please RSVP to reserve your place by calling the RSVP Hotline at 612-843-3439 or emailing rsvp@vlrw.org.

Dog Guide Support Group – January’s meeting was a hit! We plan to meet quarterly, so the next meeting will be in April. We want to know what times and days of the week work best for you, so we can get as many people possible involved. Please leave a message on the RSVP hotline or email rsvp@vlrw.org with some options, and we’ll do our best to select the best time for the most people.

New Peer Counselor Training – Want to be a Peer Counselor? We will have a new training session starting in February 2016. Training is one afternoon each week for 12 weeks, and will be held at VLR in Minneapolis. Peer Counselors share their experience to help others adjust to life with vision loss. Questions? Please call Joe at 612-843-3401. Volunteer application and phone interview required.

Winter Camping with Wilderness Inquiry – VLR is going winter camping with our friends at Wilderness Inquiry from March 1-4, 2016. This is a lodge-based experience and includes all meals. Try snowshoeing, dog sledding, and more. Space is limited. Cost is \$75, prepaid. Please call Kelly McCrary at 612-843-3412 for more information.

The Caretaking Support Group is taking a break during the winter months. We will resume meeting regularly in March of 2016. Hope to see you then! If you have any questions or comments, please call Jean Johnson at 612-843-3410.

Attention all crafters and artists! Looking for a way to give back to VLR? We would love to have creations made by participants on display at VLR or ready to give away to someone who would benefit from a special piece of our mission. Please contact Yvonne at 612-843-3426 for more info!

Braille Tutor Available – Learning Braille or dusting off your skills? A volunteer tutor is available to meet with you at VLR in Saint Paul for one-on-one tutoring and practice sessions. Flexible appointments can be scheduled during regular business hours (M-F 8:00-4:30). Please call Christina at 612-843-3419 for more information.

EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY:

2/20 (S) - Blind and Low Vision Computer Users Group
Meetings open at 12:30 and officially go from 1:00-3:00. This group meets regularly on the third Saturday of the month and rotates topics and locations. In January, learn from Debbie about intermediate iPhone and iPad skills. Meets at Central Library room 202N. Library meetings usually have 'coffee clutch' afterwards at Dunn Brothers. For information, contact Bill Herzog at Bill.Herzog@Hennepin.us or call 612-408-9415.

Tax Preparation Help – Prepare and Prosper is a nonprofit organization that provides help with taxes and financial planning. This organization works with volunteer accounting professionals to provide service through clinics

that are located all over the metro area. If you are interested in working with Prepare and Prosper, please plan ahead! Many of the clinics and appointment times fill up quickly. Please visit www.prepareandprosper.org/en/services/individuals or call 651-287-0187 for more info.

Visions Group – Do you live up in the Moorhead or Fargo area? Check out the Visions Group: a group for blind/visually impaired individuals designed to promote social networking, resource sharing, and active living in the community. Want to get involved, feature information about an event, or just ask questions about the Visions group? Contact co-leaders: Todd Fahlstrom (218) 443-1499, todd.fahlstrom@usfamily.net or Nara Murphey, (701) 306-6920, Nara_murphy@outlook.com.

St. Paul Midway Lions announces openings for Free Beep Baseball for Sight-Impaired—our 13th year starts in April 2016, plus indoor games in February. Players range in age from 15 to 70-something. Visit their website: www.beeppball.webs.com. Contact Coach Dennis Stern by emailing dennisstern@hotmail.com or call him at 651-452-5324.

VSA Minnesota has a list of audio-described, ASL-interpreted, and sensory-friendly plays, concerts, exhibits, tours, and special events. Experience shows at places like the Guthrie, Ordway, Orpheum, Hopkins Stages, Children's Theater, History Theater, and more!

Contact them at 612-332-3888 or email access@vsamn.org for more information. The calendar is online at <http://vsamn.org/community/calendar>.

Water Aerobics – Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute is offering water aerobics specifically designed for visually-impaired and blind participants. For more information, contact Stacy Shablott at 612-775-2275.

The Way We See It: A Fresh Look at Vision Loss – VLR's book is available, free of charge, to any Braille users in MN. Call Yvette: 651-539-2315. If you would like a digital book call 651-539-2300 and leave your name and number and they will mail you out a copy that you may keep for 6 months. It is now available on BARD, book number is DBC02631. Also, **SSB's Audio Library** offers an audio version of "Living with Vision Loss" – a helpful booklet about life with low vision and blindness. It is available in any format for those eligible for SSB's library service.

COMMUNITY CENTER POLICY:

RSVP and Cancellation Policy: You must RSVP for all activities. We ask that you RSVP at least 3 working days prior to event to ensure that we have enough registered participants, supplies, and volunteers. Registrants will be notified when classes are canceled due to low enrollment or weather conditions.

RSVP line: 612-843-3439 or rsvp@vlrw.org

Severe Weather Days: Please call the VLR Weather Hotline at 612-284-8107 to see if VLR offices and activities are open for that day. The hotline will be updated by 5:00 AM if VLR is closing for severe weather. Participants who have RSVPd for a class will also be notified.

Refund Policy: All events that need to be pre-paid are marked on the calendar. To hold your spot for these events, we must receive your money. If you need to cancel when a ticket is purchased in advance, you will be charged for the ticket unless someone on the waiting list can take your place. If you need to cancel please call the RSVP line at 612-843-3439 or email rsvp@vlrw.org.

Scholarships: No one is denied participation due to inability to pay. Full and partial scholarships are available. Please leave your scholarship request on the RSVP line.

Visitor Sign-in: Please sign-in and sign-out at the front desk in MPLS.

COMMUNITY CENTER PHOTO POLICY:

Participants attending Community Center events will be asked to sign an acknowledgement of VLR's Photography and Recorded Image Policy. When you attend an event at VLR, your image may be recorded for use by VLR. This use may include printed media, social media, or online uses. If you have any questions about this Policy or Acknowledgement, please contact Iris at VLR: 612-843-3425.

VLR CONTACT INFORMATION:

Christina Tucker: 612-843-3419 or christina@vlrw.org

Minneapolis Office: 1936 Lyndale Ave S. 55403

Main Line: 612-871-2222

St. Paul Office: 216 S Wabasha St., 55107

Phone: 651-224-7662

Activity Line: 612-253-5155

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RSVP: 612-843-3439 or rsvp@vlrw.org

Website: www.visionlossresources.org