

Gift of Sight Report - July 24, 2021 - Plenary Report

Mary Naccarato - Chairperson

Mark Ventimiglia - Co-Chair

Our mission is to give medical and financial assistance to individuals of all ages, who are blind or visually impaired and to further partner with other organizations to improve their quality of life. Within our financial limits, we assist those in need with specialized medical equipment and training. We provide grants for guide dogs for severely injured veterans and civilians and donate funds to veteran's groups for social events and electronic equipment. We provide an annual day of fun and games to approximately fifty blind and visually impaired children from the Helen Keller Center. Unfortunately, we were not able to do this in 2020 and 2021.

As you are aware, due to the Covid Pandemic, we cancelled our 2020 and 2021 fundraising luncheons. It was decided not to have a 2021 luncheon, since many events are occurring during this fall and many lodges are in the rebuilding mode, we did not want to add another financial burden. We fully intend to have a luncheon/brunch in September 2022. We thank you for your generosity last October when lodges and members donated \$7,100.00. However, since we needed additional assets to make up for the two lost luncheons, I requested assistance from some of our friends and Tony's business associates and we are gratified that as of today we received \$13,250. The October donation and these additional funds will allow us to continue with our mission until events get back to normal.

Despite our serious financial challenges since the last fundraiser in 2019, we were still able to make some significant donations, when the need was especially acute:

1. In 2020 donated \$25,000 to the Guide/Dog Foundation to purchase a van for their transport needs.
2. In 2020 and 2021 donated \$5,000 to sponsor two blind children and their families to attend a specialized camp. A total of \$10,000.00 for the two years.
3. In 2020 donated \$5,000.00 and \$2,500 in 2021 to the Helen Keller Center for new adapted laptops.
4. In 2020 donated \$1,200 and in 2021 donated \$1,500.00 to the Beep Baseball Team, who play baseball by using a ball that emits a sound. This year, they are in the Beep Baseball World Series.
5. In 2020 donated \$2,500 to the NY Institute for Special Education, for blind and visually impaired children. (Schermerhorn Program).
6. Donated \$750 to nine needy families with blind or visually impaired children, who were especially affected by the Pandemic. The total donation to the families was \$6,750.00, through VISIONS. (VCB)
7. Donated \$2,500 to the Foundling Organization, an orphanage for developmental, disabled and visually impaired children.
8. In May 2021 we donated \$2,500 to the NELA Virtual Dinner since they assist handicapped veterans.

We deeply thank you for your generosity in the past.

Sincerely,

Mary Naccarato

Mary Naccarato, OTR/L
Gift of Sight Chairperson

